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NEW STATESMAN

Power & authority: the long crisis at The Times

Public housing on the verge of collapse

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CHRISTMAS WITH THE MOLES

How Duncan Campbell held a Christmas party in the bowels of the Security State

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NEW STATESMAN

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The real obstacle to socialism in Britain

'DISILLUSION. . .is a luxury which must be dispensed with in the context of a deadly battle to regain the Left's intellectual initiative. . .' So we said in the first leading-article of the year now ending: self-quotation is an admittedly dangerous journalistic habit, but has its uses at special seasons.

Serious people have always known that to work without illusions bears no relation to trading in facile disillusion. What matters is rate of progress: how far have we come, in the past year, towards eroding the conservative intellectual initiative which provides our hysterical government with its remaining trappings of legitimacy? Somewhere, no doubt, but still not far enough.

Much basic ground-work, obviously, has been done by the other side. The *New Statesman*, at least, never gave any credence to the profile-writers who portrayed Thatcher, Howe and Joseph as Renaissance figures, so the dark comedy of their attempt to direct the economy comes as no surprise. Having utterly lost control of public spending, and having savaged the private sector in unprecedented fashion, the Thatcherites in 1981 may well succeed in pushing the state's share of gross domestic product significantly above anything achieved or even proposed by Labour. This week's announcements on local government spending provide another example of the New Toryism's capacity to do almost exactly the reverse of what it promises — and then, in execution, to combine with remarkable cunning the worst of all available worlds. The Tories won office with large promises about the abolition of rates — a proposal which they took seriously enough to cancel a long-overdue revaluation exercise, in the name of 'saving' an irrelevant number of candle-ends. So far from abolishing rates, they have now hurled a vast new burden upon a fiscal system whose tax-base was dangerously insecure in 1973 and has not since received any useful maintenance.

BUT A COLLAPSE of Tory credibility has no positive effects, and may only increase the electorate's distaste for politics generally. Any believable alternative must come to terms with the fact (see last week's *NS*) that the 1974-1979 Labour government, having come in on a manifesto of large radical promise, achieved exactly nothing in terms of changing the distribution of economic privilege.

Both right and left of the party have points to score in the debate over how such failure is to reversed, as it must be if Labour is to have a future. True, the workers don't think much of proposals for public ownership. Equally, though, they find little attraction in the modified monetarism which has been the chief identifiable product of the Labour right so far.

But there is another dimension to the argument, which accounts for the *New Statesman's* particular editorial emphasis. Labour's real weakness has been a mighty under-estimate — shared, in truth, by the Tories — of the difficulties of dealing with the British state. Labour's whole bias has been towards the belief that there exists in Britain an effective constitutional system, and that the task is to win control of it and turn it to radical and socialist ends.

What we have tried to show is that state power in Britain — centralised, bureaucratised and largely undisciplined — is not adaptable to that purpose, and is as sinister here as it finally must be anywhere. It makes no odds that the Whitehall apparatus is largely staffed by amiable and intelligent people. It makes no odds that many of its pretensions — to manage the economy, to plan for war, to guarantee security — are rich in absurdity, as Duncan Campbell demonstrates again this week.

The Whitehall mandarins are able and willing to wage class war — a point well illustrated by the deliberate destruction of the council housing system, discussed by Steve Schifferes on page 3. Moreover, their main spur will always be self-interest, which means giving themselves more and more centralised powers. It is instructive that the present government, which promised to ' tame' Whitehall, gave in without a murmur to demands for the abolition of local government, and for its replacement by central diktat.

The point is that state powers are too great in relation to our slenderly-established democracy, and they cannot be turned to the use of any socialist vision, wherever it formally places itself in the spectrum of left and right. Whatever else appears on the agenda of 1981, this will continue to be the decisive item.

James Bartholomew

The merchant adventurer myth

CERTAIN SECTIONS of the world's press and particularly the *Sunday Telegraph* have completely misread recent corporate battles in Hong Kong. The *Sunday Telegraph* portrayed the conflict as one between 'shrewd, powerful, wealthy Chinese' and 'simple Scottish traders'. In this 'Kiplingesque East versus West confrontation', the heroic Scots were depicted as having ('against the run of history') put one over the inscrutable Chinese.

The truth of the matter is considerably less heroic and reveals the 'simple Scottish traders' as corporate cynics disliked by British and Chinese alike. The facts of the case are that Jardine Matheson and Hong Kong Land, two old established 'Hongs' which share the same Chairman, have bought enough shares in each other to make it well-nigh impossible for a third party to take one of them over. The deals are seen here as an exercise in self-preservation by ineffectual management. The independent shareholders would, on the whole, have been only too pleased if a Chinese entrepreneur took over one or both companies. They might then have been able to realise more of the underlying value of their companies. The management consists largely of ex-public school British men who are paid considerable amounts of money to live in sizeable apartments and is not highly thought of. The specific objections to the recent manoeuvres of the two companies are that:

- Hong Kong Land issued new shares, at a discount to the market value of its property, to Jardine Matheson in exchange for property, at market value. The deal was thus inequitable.
- Jardine issued new shares to Hong Kong Land for cash. This went a long way to frustrating any potential bid. No good reason was offered why Jardine should prefer to offer the shares to Land rather than anyone else. Land shareholders resented the fact that their com-

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eve Schifferes reports on the collapse of public housing

The twenty year wait

WITHIN A few years hardly any new council houses will be built in Britain; those on council house waiting lists will have to wait for up to 20 years for a home and Britain will be well set on the way to recreating the slum housing problems of the forties. These are the main conclusions of Shelter's survey of the cuts in local authority house building[1], which are only reinforced by this week's decision by Michael Heseltine to extend the moratorium on new council house building.

Housing is taking the major brunt of the government's spending cuts: three-quarters of the total for the next four years as outlined in the Public Expenditure White Paper. By 1984 housing will account for 3.9 per cent of government spending, compared with 7.3 per cent last year. Labour and Tory governments alike have found housing an attractive target for cuts in public spending. As a large proportion of the budget is capital spending single swipes of the axe can apparently save large sums of money. In addition, concentration on new house building appears politically less risky: cut backs in programmes such as estate modernisation affect identifiable groups but new building only affects the future housing of the homeless and those on the waiting list — a less readily identifiable group to whom no promises have been made.

To make matters worse, cuts in capital spending take years to show up in the figures so one package of cuts has little immediate effect, provoking another lot. As this week's announcement of rent rises of up to £3.25 a week shows, the government is also trying to cut spending on housing revenue; but fluctuating interest rates and the operation of rent rebates makes the net cut both less certain and smaller than might be expected, so the brunt of the cuts will still fall on capital spending. Many councils are likely to make further capital cuts of their own, so long as there are doubts over the future of further finance.

As a result, by 1983 it is likely that less than 30,000 council houses in England will be completed, even fewer than suggested by the Select Committee on the Environment. This compares with over 100,000 just three years ago and will hit those currently on housing waiting lists who lack the access to a decent home at a reasonable price provided by owner occupation and public sector housing. Half the people on council housing waiting lists live as part of another household. And, in London for example, the average head of household income of a family on the waiting list in 1978 was £2,600, compared with the average for first time buyers of £5,100. Even the increases in council rents will not release houses to those on the waiting lists: better off tenants will not be driven into the private owner occupied sector but will tend to buy their council house at a massive discount.

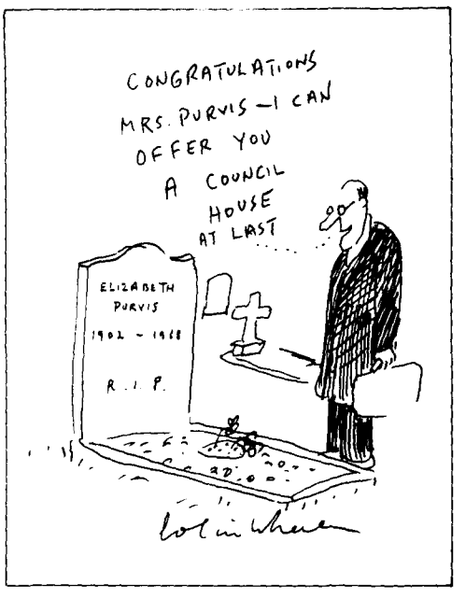
THE CUTBACK in council house building will eliminate the so-called 'housing surplus'. This was, in fact, a mirage created by assuming that most single people sharing accommodation did not want a home of their own and that housing in one part of the country could be offset by housing elsewhere. But now even this disappears, becoming a housing deficit of half a million homes by 1984. Shelter estimate that by then there will be two million households on council waiting lists with new applicants waiting, on average, 21 years. Some councils will just stop housing anyone from the lists.

These estimates may be conservative in view of current economic and demographic trends. In a recession the demand for council housing always rises and the supply of council houses available for re-letting to people on the waiting lists falls. In addition the increasing number of marriages, divorces and old people in the population are powerful demographic pressures increasing demand. Already record numbers of people are joining the waiting lists.

But the problem is not just one of absolute shortage. Britain's housing stock is deteroirating rapidly and the bulge of older housing requiring immediate attention is going to increase sharply in the 1980s: a third of Britain's housing stock was built before the First World War and the majority in bad condition is owned by private landlords and elderly owner occupiers who are unwilling or cannot afford to repair it. A recent survey in Birmingham estimated that 80,000 of the city's 107,000 pre-1919 houses will have to be improved in the next decade to prevent them becoming sub-standard. The Association of Metropolitan Authorities reckoned that the total cost of major repairs in 1976 (at today's prices) for all Britain's housing was over £14 billion.

IT IS WORTH remembering that one of the preconditions for the current attack on public housing was the failure of the Labour government's housing policy, in particular and crucially in the field of housing finance. Attempts to reform this were effectively abandoned when Peter Shore succeeded the late Anthony Crosland at the Department of Environment.

Housing faces a fundamental financial difficulty which was apparent to the 19th century private enterprise property companies and philanthropic trusts, who were unable to provide enough decent housing which met public health regulations and was within the means of the average worker. This was the main reason for the emergence of public housing before the first world war, acknowledged equally by Conservatives as well as Labour[2].



This week's decision to raise the limit on some building society loans from £25,000 to £37,000 shows the government is still determined to preserve the regressive subsidy to owner occupiers. A government seriously committed to housing reform would have to tackle this feature of housing finance, which also ensures that the subsidy to owner occupiers is open-ended and will grow continuously in future years, as well as the unequal distribution of council house subsidy.

The other major areas where structural changes are needed are in the system of allocating council housing and in mobility. The government has proposed a scheme to help council tenants who want to move house but councils are not compelled to observe it and in any case it only makes available one per cent of lettings. With the increased pressures councils will be facing in the next two years a much bolder scheme is needed.

[1] *And I'll Blow Your House Down:* Housing Need in Britain, from Shelter, 157 Waterloo Road, SE1.
[2] See particularly, *Cruel Habitations*, Enid Gauldie; *Housing, Social Policy and the State*, Joseph Melling (ed) and the work of Dave Englander at the Open University.

pany should have invested in a relatively low growth trading house.

● Jardine Matheson bought shares in Hong Kong Land which took its holding up to around 40 per cent. It failed to consult the Takeovers Committee as it is meant to do and, after finally meeting the Committee, tried to persuade the local press that the Committee was incompetent.

Such behaviour has endeared the two companies to no one, least of all the British Administration here. Some senior officials in the government regard Jardine's behaviour towards the Takeover Committee as arrogant and likely to bring the territory into disrepute. The lack of Chinese faces on the board of the company is also thought of as anachronistic, if not offensive.

The surprise to a newcomer in Hong Kong is that Jardine Matheson, whose name conjures up images of adventure and enterprise in the East, is seen here not so much a flagship for the British as an embarrassment.

NEXT YEAR

Peter Kellner begins 1981 with a theme-setting investigation of the prospects for the British economy. The national forecasts, he shows, are being manipulated to justify a policy of brutal recession — at exactly the moment when real economic resurgence could be organised. The long-term political strategy which underlies the crudity of Tory tactics can now be exposed for the first time. (Plus: Round III in the bout with Patrick Minford, the man with monetarism's black box.)
Also *John McVicar* introduces a new kind of sports column, based on participation instead of passive observation. Scheduling may be unpredictable, due to maintenance down-time between assignments, though Mr McVicar wishes it to be understood that he is not getting into any hang-gliders.

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A Christmas party for the moles

Deep below London lies a hidden maze of government tunnels, part of a 1950s network established to protect the government. These tunnels may easily be entered from the public highway. We therefore chose this unusual spot for our Christmas Party for Moles, bringing cakes and gifts, decorations and Christmas trees to the very entrance of the home of the Nuclear Button. The government may not care for our sense of humour. They should be deeply grateful that we brought only Christmas stockings, and that our easily-accomplished weekend visit was not a trip by terrorists with a sinister seasonal sackful of gelignite and incendiaries. Such an act would have surpassed Guy Fawkes in cutting off a large portion of Britain's communications and defence capacity for months to come.

In happier spirit, DUNCAN CAMPBELL invites readers to the Moles' Christmas Party.

All photographs by Chris Davies.

Christmas tunnelcruising cycle is laden dc with mini-gifts for moles, a christmas tree festive decoration. This time, the opportunity an underground trip to the bowels of the P Office Tower, or below the sacred grass Lords cricket ground, is passed up. Tunne runs on to Maida Vale.

WHO ARE THE MOLES that feed the *New Statesman* with its unending packages of secret documents and other bureaucratic detritus? This question, at once deeply troubling the MI5, the CIA and the KGB, will here, for the first time be answered. The underground spies in government ranks — the *NS* Mole Force — are in secret contact with our reporters at midnight rendezvous deep below our own offices.

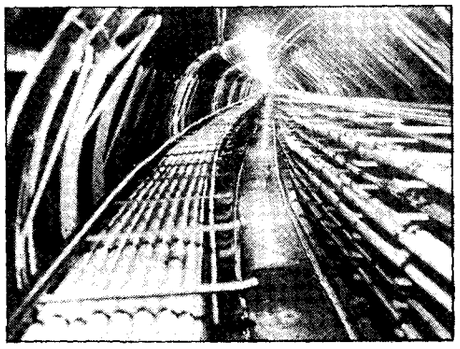
From run-down Bethnal Green, in the East End of London, to the plush western pastures of Maida Vale, from Euston Station in the north to Waterloo in the south, runs a network of secret government tunnels, built in the 1950s and 60s to protect the machinery and communications of government from A-Bombs and other mindless violence. Over 30 shafts and a dozen lifts connect these catacombs with the surface — most of them emerging unobtrusively in government buildings or telephone exchanges.

Inplausibly disguised as a touring cyclist, I have often visited these tunnels. An access shaft emerges, usefully, on a traffic island in a public highway — Bethnal Green Road, E1. On this festive occasion, my travelling kit includes not just a bicycle but a Christmas tree, decorations, and gifts for the new stars in the Good Mole Guide.

A manhole cover, gently raised, gives access to one of the Post Office's thousands of subsurface cable chambers. But this one is different.

A stout grey-painted waterproof door leads through the side of this chamber. Open it, and you are standing on the top platform of a shaft one hundred feet deep. Climb down the rung ladders, and you stand poised at the entrance to the secret network. A long ribbon of lights and cables extends into the distance, as you look into Tunnel L (St Paul's to Bethnal Green). No bustling commuters or noisy trains here, just a pleasantly warm and enveloping silence.

'. . . a long ribbon of cables and lights extends into the distance . . .'

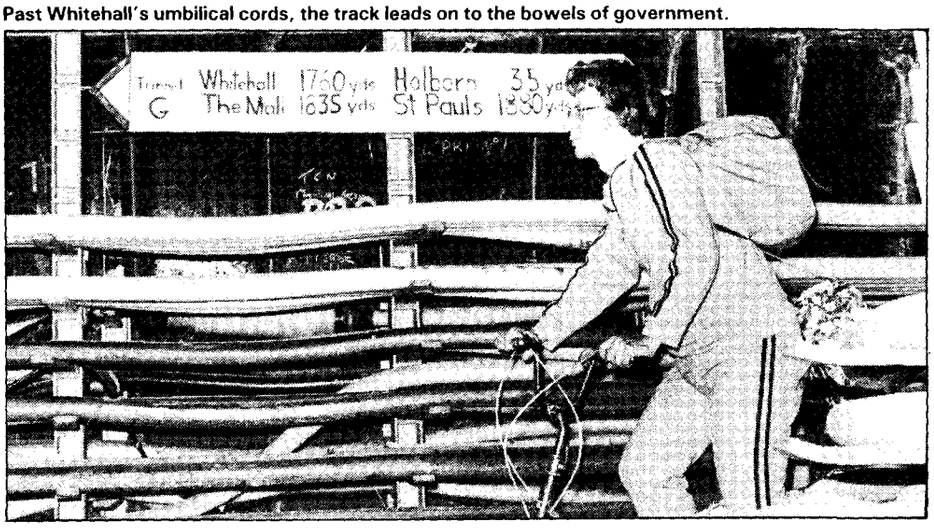


The tunnels have an eerie feel to them, as any bomb shelter might. There is no-one about after 5pm, and the Patrolmen who daily pace these subterranean corridors concentrate on checking their structure and not on keeping watch for journalistic infiltrators. There are over 12 miles of tunnel (I kid you not), so a bicycle does indeed make light of otherwise heavy footwork as one travels into and around central London on this uniquely quiet and highly exclusive subway. Alternatively, with health in mind, one may gently jog through these pleasant underground corridors, the only pollution-free running track to be found in (or under) central London. (At this point, I would stake public claim to the world record for the 1½ mile distance run one hundred feet below ground: 10.8 minutes, St Pauls to Covent Garden, Tunnel M.)

Riding down Tunnel L, one passes side shafts and alleys *en route* to the first interchange, directly below Postal Headquarters close to St Paul's Cathedral. Here, tunnels shoot off in all directions: three *rise* to join the ordinary London underground Central Line, and the Post Office's own underground mail railway. Tunnel R and Tunnel A grandly circuit round St Paul's Cathedral — they lead to an underground complex with six shafts below the Post Office's Citadel telephone exchange. Citadel's workings, and shaft, are hidden behind seven foot thick concrete walls.

But Tunnel B leads on to greater things, on to Holborn, home of *New Statesman*, and the seat of government. I ride through dense jungles of cable, and past noisy ventilator fans. The air becomes hot and fetid. We are nearing Whitehall.

Past Whitehall's umbilical cords, the track leads on to the bowels of government.



THE MOLES' CHRISTMAS PARTY is to held at the entrance to the nastiest bit of gove ment of all. This is the Chamber Of Ma Destruction With The Nuclear Button In It would naturally have been more exhilarating have partied around The Button, but this pr cise bit of the tunnels is undoubtedly guard by blood-thirsty SAS men with huge, slaverin Alsatians. Reliable sources speak of at least regimental Great Dane. We made do with th doorstep of the awful place.

Tunnel G (Holborn to Whitehall) took th reporter, with an entourage of festive moles, t the doorstep. We rode beneath trendy Cover Garden, past the side alley where the electri cars are parked. A few are lined up, their ba teries on charge. The proper denizens of thi tunnel network, readers may note, ride i greater style. Beside them are long, narrov trailers for hauling underground cables — umbilical cords of Government and Capital not to mention the Post Office.

We pass more side turnings — Tunnel M leads off to Fleet Street (clearly a Mole Motorway this one) and Tunnel P meanders off under Leicester Square to finish up below the Post Office Tower. Finally Tunnel S heads left across the Thames to Waterloo, and the bizarre

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roadsign, such as are to be found at every intersection, warns ominously that we are now travelling down a Dead End. There is 'No Exit' from Whitehall. Do we have no hope, if pinned down by the SAS? Three hundred yards on and we halt at the start of the Whitehall Bunkers. The main tunnel is 20 feet wide, and leads through double doors to the first of the Bunkers, a Post Office lair called Q-Whitehall. Q is Post Office jargon for hush-hush; rightly so, as this nest of wiring is the first part of the tunnel deep below Whitehall.

Down the Q-Whitehall tunnel, narrower eight feet wide tunnels lead off to the bowels of the great Departments of State. There's one for the Ministry of Defence, one for the Admiralty, one for the Old War Office, one to No 10, one to the Treasury. At the end of each side tunnel a worn spiral staircase and mini-lift reaches up into the corridors of power. The air is fusty. It is being piped in, along great metal ducts, from the new offices of nice Mr Heseltine's Department of the Environment. Perhaps they've cut out the filters.

The whole of Whitehall, virtually, is interlinked through this central tunnel,which dogs-legs around the Houses of Parliament (needless to say, these are *not* connected) finishing up in the gigantic underground complex below the DoE. This area, like the original small tunnel network, was first constructed as a World War 2 'citadel' to resist 1,000lb bombs and V-Weapons. The tunnels and the DoE citadel were enormously extended during the 1950s as an A-Bomb shelter. The greater power of H-bombs has made them vulnerable and so the major government bunkers are now outside London.

But there's still one of these metaphysical buttons, in the Ministry of Defence Operations Centre. (Straight down to Parliament Square and it's the third tunnel on your left, sir.) Another shaft leads to the Cabinet Office, with its famed COBRA Cabinet Office Briefing Area, HQ of Mr Whitelaw and his heroes of the Iranian Embassy Siege. Close by COBRA is the one piece of Whitehall bunkery which may be visited by the ordinary tourist — Winston Churchill's WW2 underground headquarters opposite St James's Park.

Also opposite St James's is the Institute of Contemporary Arts, which tunnel enthusiasts believe to conceal a small but significant part of this sytem. A ventilator fan, linked to the Admiralty's bit of the Whitehall bunkers has been tucked into the fabric of the ICA — beside the Gents, to be precise. The fan may be heard and observed by taking a discrete footing on the ICA's sanitary ware. The odours then detected may well be naval.

BACK TO TRAFALGAR SQUARE for the underground mole party. We have gathered at the start of Q-Whitehall. At this point we are about 40 yards south of Nelson's Column and a hundred feet below it. Festivities ensue, as the cover depicts. A twelvemonth of uncovering bureaucratic skulduggery is celebrated, and the Mole Force is inspired with further Principle and greater Moral Courage, the better to combat Fear and Loathing instilled by the notorious Civil Service Estacode and the no-longer-quite-so-dreaded Official Secrets Act.

I muse on the etymological origins of mole theory. Comrade Lenin, it is understood, started the whole thing off with his loose talk about 'Red Moles'. The word was resurrected in Langley, Virginia, as CIA code for a Russian infiltrator into the West's secret works. Much popularised, it was launched into the British language a year ago as the style for Anthony Blunt, a spy for our wartime allies, those Russians. It has now lost all its pejorative connotations, courtesy of British Steel and its 'mole'. Mole is now British for 'Whistleblower', an excellent innovation. A toast to that. Moles are, now and henceforth, in the Public Interest. A toast to the Public Interest.

I have abandoned the cunning disguise as a passing cycle tourist, and dressed formally for this occasion. The senior ranks of the Mole Force demand it. Christmas tree and decorations are set out with gifts and consumables for many moles. Santa and Rudolph, ably played by distinguished poet Roger Woddis, join the happy scene. At the end of the celebration, we pose for the week's cover photograph. Thereafter, the moles disperse through the tunnels, our last lingerings undisturbed by Patrolmen, SAS guards, slavering Great Danes, or itinerant Post Office cable-laying persons.

I pedal off slowly on the trusty tunnelcruiser, away from the Dead End of Whitehall, and must now choose a route out. Back at the *New Statesman* offices, the Editor and other *generalissimos* of our journalistic enterprise are waiting urgently to sample the coming year's scoop harvest provided by the Mole Force.

A right turn into Tunnel M offers the prospect of a jaunt a hundred feet below Drury Lane. A little sign indicates that Fleet Street's own shafts to the surface, Shafts NA and NB, might be suitable ways out. But no mole has ever spoken of these mysteries, and precisely where these underground accesses go. Shaft NA might emerge in the *Daily Telegraph*. Or — God Forbid! — *Daily Express*. Is Chapman Pincher a denizen of these shadowy passages also? I enquire, but the normal enthusiastic babble of the moles lapses into silence.

At the far end of Tunnel G, there is another interchange. We venture into Tunnel C, a bombproof highway to Euston. But a giant illuminated red sign warns *Danger*. This tunnel, a notice explains, is unventilated and has no air in it. Continuing this trip might perhaps provide a happy ending to the tale for the Post Office. Turning back, one climbs a steep staircase to the catacombs below our own Holborn office, catacombs which include an entire long-distance telephone exchange.

Close at hand, shafts GA and BC, complete with lift, now emerge in Holborn Telephone Exchange, and the entrance to this building is a mere 30 yards from our Great Turnstile offices. This geographical good fortune has already been communicated to other staff, and plans are in hand for commandeering the place as a People's Nuclear Shelter (with especial reference to journalists) should the Worst happen, or be thought likely. Until then, our handy Holborn shafts provide convenient access to and from the mole holes a hundred feet below.

This article, no doubt, will result in the tunnels and the shafts of this extraordinay network being knee-deep in persons from MI5, MI6, the Special Branch, the Post Office, and Health Inspectors. They will find no moles; a new rendezvous has been arranged. They will, of course, be disturbed by the Big Question. Who was the Great Festive Mole who, last Christmas, instructed me to lift the manhole cover on the traffic island between Bethnal Green Road and Sclater Street E1, and thus opened up this underground world. Does he or she even exist? My lips should remain sealed but the position of this handy hole may be discovered from public sources.

To MI5 and the Special Branch, a Happy Christmas and a trying and unstable New Year for '81.

Readers who wish maps of this underground network for themselves may obtain them from the New Statesman, *by sending a stamped addressed envelope and a £1 donation to the National Council for Civil Liberties Appeal to: 10 Great Turnstile, London WC1.*

Stairs lead up from the deadly Euston tunnel to the Holborn tunnel.

The lift in shaft BC emerges just a few steps from the door of the *NS* off High Holborn.

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Survival of the old warrior spirit

In last week's issue GERARD CHALIAND described the guerrilla war in Afghanistan. Here he presents a guide to the disparate and often feuding opposition groups which are fighting that war.

ONE YEAR AGO, on 27 December 1979, Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan.

The first aim of the invasion was to prevent the collapse of the Communist government which had been installed in a *coup* in April 1978. After 18 months the regime — dominated by the Khalq faction — had seen its authority crumble to a point where it no longer controlled the towns. The resistance movement was paralysing the country and seemed on the road to victory.

Initially, when it had seized power, the government had not been unpopular. The previous regime, under Daoud, had been corrupt and ineffectual. The promised agrarian reform had not taken place. Hints that the country's political life would be 'democratised' did not result in any action. After the *coup* the rural areas remained silent but the towns, especially Kabul, manifested a certain amount of sympathy for the new leaders.

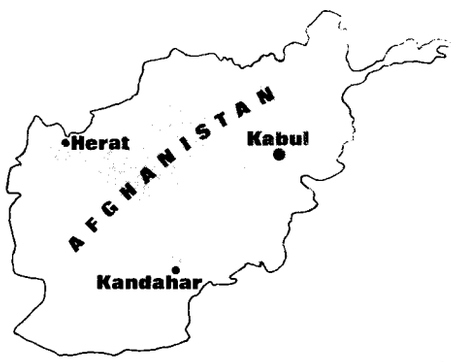
Very soon, however, the new regime began to alienate its supporters. The two Marxist-Leninist factions which made up the government — the Khalq and the Parcham — squabbled continually, and relations between the two sides were not improved when the Khalq took to sending Parcham leaders to distant ambassadorships: for instance Babrak Karmal, head of the Parcham faction, was packed off to be envoy to Prague. Power in the regime rested with two men, Taraki and Amin, the latter of whom had formed a network of army officers sympathetic to the Khalq. He had also been the real architect of the *coup* which had brought the Communists to power.

Agrarian reform, which the regime had initially announced would take two years, was introduced hastily in an attempt to win over the peasantry. But the reform was enforced by urban officials who did not know much about local conditions, and whose job was made more difficult by the lack of any land register. They attacked land owners large and small, and also had a go at tribal chiefs who were, often, respected local figures. There was no political preparation whatsoever for this reform, so it was hardly surprising that the peasants should feel suspicious of gangs of outsiders who turned up and went on the rampage.

There was, moreover, little point in redistributing land in Afghanistan without also sharing seeds and water more equitably. Many peasants found themselves to be the owners of patches of land which they could neither sow nor irrigate, and in a number of cases they actually handed back their titles of ownership to the original proprietor in exchange for the wherewithal to make something grow.

WHEN THEY ARRIVED in a village, the Khalq officials would usually assemble the entire population and tell them that, from then on, everyone — men, women and children — must be taught to read and write. In a society were women are not willingly shown in public, these announcements were greeted with anger. It was inconceivable that teachers should give classes to women and girls.

Another important rural tradition was the marriage settlement. This wasn't simply a 'price tag' for a bride, but also acted as an encouragement to partners to stay together, since the dowry had to be returned in the event of divorce. Nevertheless, the new government briskly introduced an order banning dowries.



Shaded part of map shows main areas of rebel activity.

Reforms such as this, imposed in a hurry during the summer of 1978, rapidly gave rise to considerable opposition. Unlike in Iran, where resistance to the Shah came predominantly from the towns, the Afghan opposition was initially rural and tribal. It was also, consequently, rather diversified.

The population of Afghanistan is far from homogeneous. The largest ethnic group (which comprises 40 per cent of a population of 17 million) is the Pushtuns. Next come the Tajiks (about 30-35 per cent), who speak Persian, and then the Hazaras (12-15 per cent), people of Mongolian origin who are Shi'ites in a country where most people are Suni. There are three main Turkish-speaking minorities — the Uzbeks, the Turkomans and the Kirghiz — as well as a separate minority called the Nouristanis.

The violent resistance which began early in 1979 was essentially the work of the Hazaras, the Nouristanis and the Pushtuns, who were determined not to allow a centralised state to impose its authroity. Other tribes soon joined in.

The Afghans, unlike the vast majority of Asian or African people, have never been colonised. Outside Kabul, Afghan society has thus remained astonishingly traditional. After successfully resisting an attempted British occupation in the 19th century, the Afghans benefited from the rivalry between the British and Russian empires, which transformed them into a buffer state. The arrival of the Soviet troops last year was the Afghans' first experience of foreign occupation.

Proud of their independent tradition, and shaped by a culture which glorifies the warrior-spirit, the Afghans are fighting in conditions in which most other societies would give in. They do not know how to submit. The resistance is particularly active in the north and east of the country (see map). It is worth pointing out that the shaded area on the map also encompasses the country's most mountainous regions. Outside the shaded area, there are a few large pockets of activity, notably around Kandahar and Herat. There is, however, no resistance in the north-west of the country, or in the desert areas.

ONE SHOULD NOT speak of the Afghan 'resistance' without describing in some detail what this means. Contrary to the impression held by many in the West, there is no great unified resistance. There are instead numerous groupings, which came into existence for differing reasons and which — far from being coordinated — are usually in rivalry with one another.

All the main resistance groups have their headquarters in Peshawar, just over the border in Pakistan. Three of them are made up of Moslem fundamentalists: the 'Islamic Party', led by H. Gulbudin; the 'Islamic Tendency' of Yunis Khalis; and the 'Islamic Society of Afghanistan', led by B. Rabani. The Tendency and the Society are both breakaway movements from the Party, which has been active for some years. After the coup which brought Daoud to power in 1973 it went into exile in Pakistan, where, with assistance from Bhutto, it organised a rebellion against Daoud which was put down by the Afghan army. Its militants — people of rural origin who had moved to the towns — are from the same part of the *bourgeoisie* as the militant members of the Khalq faction in the Communist Party.

The undisputed leaders of the Islamic Party — such as Professor Niazi, the eminent theologian — were executed by Daoud. None of the seconds-in-command who then took over — Gulbudin, Rabani and Yunis Khalis — had a charismatic enough personality to hold the movement together, so the party split.

Those who have remained in the Islamic Party under Gulbudin are the hard-liners, people who have no qualms about torturing or killing anyone who disagrees with them. The Islamic revolution favoured by them is one which is violently against corrupt judges, 'modernists' who have been infected by Western ideas, supporters of tribalism and nationalism (which are considered to be a restricting influence on what should be the universal message of Islam) and, above all, godless Communists. The party's hero is Ayatollah Khomeini.

It is interesting to note that the Karmal regime and the Russians consider Gulbudin's party to be the 'real' resistance even though, as the most extreme movement, it is the least likely to win mass support. Rather than join the 'alliance' which, on paper at least, binds together the other five main groups, the Islamic Party has decided to stand alone under the leadership of Gulbudin, who is thought to be the most intelligent, the most ambitious and the least scrupulous of the opposition leaders. His supporters are known to be well-established in Kabul, and in the provinces of Kunduz, Baghlan, Kunar and Nangrahar.

The breakaway Islamic Tendency under Yunis Khalis — the only resistance leader who is actually joining in the fighting itself — is a regional movement, with a strong base in Nangrahar. Rabani's Islamic Society, which is just as

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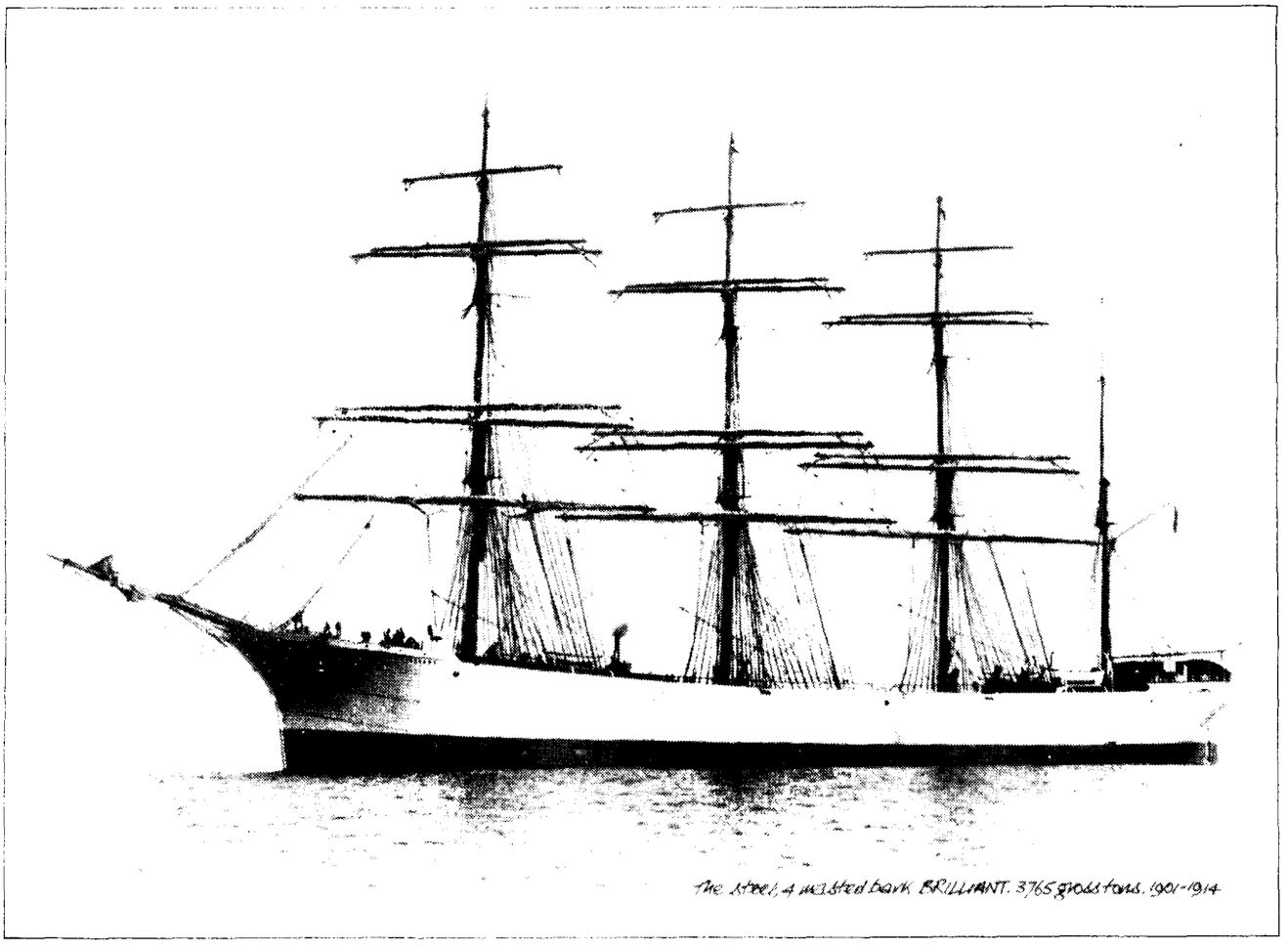

"Supertanker, 1901"

The dawn of the century marked twilight time for the age of sail — with one notable exception. Kerosene oil for the lamps of China was big business and wind power was still the best way to get it there. The *Brilliant*, built for Mobil in Scotland, was the biggest kerosene clipper of them all, carrying four thousand tons on every voyage out.

About the time of World War I, though, newly developed oil-fired steam tankers proved to be better than sailing ships for transporting fuel in bulk to far eastern storage terminals. That meant an end to kerosene clippers.

Today, however, a Mobil *Brilliant* still plies the high seas. The clipper's modern namesake carries more than 100,000 tons of crude oil as part of a Mobil tanker fleet — both owned and chartered — with a total capacity of almost 10 million tons.

Our fleet goes on evolving. By replacing steam turbines with diesel engines, we are cutting fuel consumption by up to a third. This saving keeps transport costs down and frees valuable oil for use elsewhere.

For these reasons, Mobil's marine engineers are now studying the possibilities of applying alternative energy sources — including coal and even sail — to tankers of the future.

No-one is immune to the rising costs of energy — not even an oil company.

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fundamentalist as Gulbudin's group, but rather less sectarian, is a force to be reckoned with in the northern provinces of Badakhsan, Takhar, Kunduz, Baghlan and Samangan.

The three other resistance groups of significance were set up in 1978-9 to fight the Khalq-dominated regime. They are the National Front for Islamic Revolution in Afghanistan; the National Liberation Front; and the Islamic Revolutionary Movement.

The first two, although they are called national fronts, are in fact regional. In their present form they do not seem dynamic enough to expand from their local base. They have no organisation worth speaking of, and they rely entirely on the rural Pushtun areas in the south, where they can play on tribal loyalties. These two 'fronts' stand for everythinjg that Gulbudin's Islamic Party wishes to destroy. Although they are more conservative in religious matters (in its way, Gulbudin's party is rather revolutionary in this respect), the fronts are more receptive to nationalism and modernism.

The Islamic Revolutionary Movement, which consists largely of mullahs, is probably the most significant of the resistance organisations. Most mullahs reject fundamentalism, and this group commands support in both the north and the south of the country. Its leader, N. Mohamedi, is a former member of parliament, but he does not have the authority to lead a mass movement and there could soon be a split.

To confuse matters further, the Nouristanis and the Hazaras have their own resistance movements, with elected leadership. The Nouristanis have 'representative councils' in Laghman, Petch and Kamdesh — the last of which sends a delegate to Peshawar. The Hazaras' elected council has delegates in both Peshawar and Iran.

WHAT OF THE LEFT? The groups which characterise themselves as 'radical' are weak and without any great centres of support. There is something called 'The Afghan People', which is led from Kabul by G.M. Ferhat, and there is a small Pushtun-speaking group with a devoted following but without any resources. When this second group tried to establish a base in Nangrahar its members were killed by supporters of the Islamic Tendency, who felt that they were too left-wing and not religious enough.

It is difficult to assess the size of the various resistance movements, but it seems likely that each of the six largest groups has more than 5,000 fighters; in the National Front for Islamic Revolution, the Islamic Revolutionary Movement and the Islamic Society the figure is probably nearer 20,000. It is evident, however, that the forces which make up the resistance are fragmented, contradictory and confused. At the moment they certainly do not constitute an alternative government.

Nevertheless, they fight on. The imposition of 'socialism' by foreign tanks has been violently rejected and, whether one likes it or not, the most potent opposition forces are those with a religious identity. Many resistance soldiers who, only a couple of years ago in Kabul, did not have any religious feelings, are now to be found at prayers five times a day.

It is true that there is no 'national spirit' — the Afghans' point of reference until now has been religious or tribal — but the lesson of history is that foreign domination provides a highly favourable climate for the growth of nationalism. However, the Afghan Communists also feel that history is on their side: they see the Afghan resistance as representing reaction and obscurantism, and they believe that, in the end, the forces of progress will triumph.

One cannot easily dismiss this argument. It is true that the moslem parts of the Soviet empire are economically better developed than Afghanistan. It is also true that, if the resistance succeeds, the country is in danger of remaining something of an ethnic museum — or worse. Nevertheless, in spite of everything, and with all its faults, the Afghan resistance is fighting in order that it shall not submit to a destiny forced on it by another country. The real task now is for the resistance to develop a greater political, organisational and strategic sophistication. In Peshawar there are signs that this is already happening.

Just as crucial for the resistance is the question of arms. Between my two visits to the country this year, in June and in October and November, there was no improvement in the quality or quantity of weaponry. The most common rifles are still British Lee Enfields left over from the Second World War or Kalachnikovs 'made in Egypt'. Anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons are scarce: a few machine guns from China, a few anti-tank guns, a few mortars.

The future course of the war will depend on the introduction of much more heavy weaponry, as well as mines and explosives. With Reagan in the White House the guerrillas' arms will probably improve enormously. (Some of the Afghans in Peshawar are already training themselves to use Sam 2 ground-to-air missiles.) If American aid — clandestine or not — were provided to the Afghan rebels, the cost to the Russians of the invasion might become unpleasantly high. This aid could then be used by the Americans as a bargaining tool since, in the current Russian logic, the fate of Afghanistan is probably negotiable.

Certainly the Russians have not yet suffered much for their invasion of Afghanistan. The West's reaction was decidedly restrained: a very partial boycott of the Olympics; a grain embargo which has had little effect since countries such as Argentina have been happy to make up the difference; and a ban on technology sales which has barely been noticed. The countries of Western Europe denounced the invasion while simultaneously *increasing* their economic dealings with the Soviet Union. France in particular has noticeably boosted its commercial relations with the USSR since 1979.

The idea that the Soviet Union has 'special interests' in Afghanistan has been accepted, even if it is publicly deplored. The Carter administration finally decided that the invasion of Afghanistan was the Soviet Union's last territorial claim and did not signal a great new expansionist sweep. For this reason Carter and Brzezinski felt that it would be politically unwise to make the Russians pay too high a price for their Afghan excursion.

There has been much talk of the Soviet leadership's fear of Islamic 'contagion', which is supposed to have prompted their intervention in Afghanistan. In fact, the Soviet Union is not afraid of Islam; what the Soviet Union really fears, in the long run, is China. The USSR's moslem empire is under control, and the chance of any eruption there in the foreseeable future is practically nil. The invasion of Afghanistan was actually rather welcome to the moslem inhabitants of Soviet Central Asia, in that it increased the proportion of moslems in the territories which are under Russian control.

Even though the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was dressed up as a 'defensive' move — the troops were coming merely to lend a hand to the crumbling regime — it is equally explicable in terms of the territorial continuity which has always dictated Soviet advances. The wider the Soviet borders, the stronger the Soviet Union becomes, since it has new countries to menace. Even if Pakistan and Iran are not yet under direct threat as a result of the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, the Soviet Union will find itself in the best possible position for leaning on these two countries if it can consolidate its grip on Afghanistan. We should not allow it to do so.

Translated by Francis Wheen

Jean Coussins

How mothers will suffer

IF ANY OF the government's proposals for changing the system of maternity benefits were adopted most women on fairly average earnings would suffer significant financial loss. Our table shows the results of calculations made by the Child Poverty Action Group and published this week[1]. Even if the woman on £80 a week did not at present qualify for the weekly maternity allowance, she would still lose £206 under Option 1 (which concentrates all the benefits into a grant of £140, abolishing everything else), although she would gain between £67 and £120 under options 2 and 3. If she didn't now quality for maternity pay from her employer, she would still get £218 more than she would under Option 1, although options 2 and 3 would leave her better off by between £55 and £108.

The government aims to reform maternity benefits on the basis of no extra cost, so all three options simply juggle with the already inadequate resources for the sake of administrative convenience, improving benefits for some women at the expense of others. CPAG calculate that all three forms of maternity payment could be preserved and the grant *still* increased to at least £100 immediately, restoring it to its value in 1969 when it was last raised. The money would come chiefly from the savings from the maternity allowance budget to be made when earnings related supplement is phased out and then abolished. This would yield £47 million of the £55½ million required by the end of 1983. Other sources of money include the surplus in the state Maternity Pay Fund and the increased revenue produced by bringing maternity allowances into the tax net.

[1]*Swings and Roundabouts*, 70p from CPAG, 1 Macklin Street WC2.

Table showing present entitlement of woman earning £80 a week, who qualifies for maternity grant, allowance and pay, and how she would be affected under each of the 3 proposed options.

	Sum received £	Loss or gain £
Now	679[1]	
Option 1 (Grant of £140 only)	140	Loss 539
Option 2 (£25 Grant + employer-paid weekly allowance)	415	Loss 264
Option 3a (£25 Grant + DHSS allowance of £24.50)	466	Loss 213
Option 3b (£80 Grant + DHSS allowance at present level)	413	Loss 266

1: Excluding earnings related supplement on the allowance; allowance at 1979-80 rates; maternity pay gross of tax and NI but net of deduction for allowances.

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When Beethoven's Fidelio first opened, in 1805, the presence of surly French troops kept the Viennese audiences away. When it reopened, in 1806, Beethoven quarrelled with the theatre management and withdrew his score after two performances.

When Glyndebourne revived it, in the summer of 1979, the ITV strike prevented us from bringing it to your screens.

The opera that refused to die, or how we finally recorded Beethoven's Fidelio.

By the time the strike was over it was long past the end of the Glyndebourne season and the Opera House was closed, shuttered against the damp, freezing weather.

Elisabeth Söderström, who had sung an inspired Leonore/Fidelio, was in Sweden and the rest of the cast were scattered across four continents. The London Philharmonic Orchestra under its conductor Bernard Haitink were recording Elgar in London.

Yet so brilliant had Sir Peter Hall's production been (following Beethoven's original stage-directions to the letter) that we decided to reassemble the cast and musicians to recreate it.

We flew the cast back from all parts of the world and coaxed the orchestra back from London. We opened, aired and heated the Glyndebourne Opera House, moved in cameras, microphones and caterers, and invited a special audience down for just one afternoon.

The result was one of the finest, if unlikeliest, performances of the opera yet seen. You can enjoy the Glyndebourne production of Fidelio, as we did that cold January afternoon, by watching ITV at 9.30 on Monday, 29th December.

Don't miss it, whatever you do. If its history is anything to go by, you may never have another chance to see it.

SOUTHERN TELEVISION

Beethoven's Fidelio at Glyndebourne: a special production by Southern Television on Monday, 29th December at 9.30 pm.

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How they put the paper to bed

INNIS MacBEATH was formerly Labour Editor of The Times, leader of the journalists' union on the paper, and chairman of the federation through which other Times unions liaised. Here he charts the failure of the Thomson group, which bought The Times in 1966 and joined it with the Sunday Times, to understand the roles of 'authority' and 'power' in good management.

ON THE DAY when Thomsons announced that Times Newspapers must be sold or closed by March, one of my former colleagues said: 'It's a relief — like lancing a boil'. He has worked 30 years for *The Times*.

When I left the paper in 1973, after a mere 16 years, the Thomson Organisation was flush with money, and there was much goodwill and disciplined habit to keep the paper afloat. All three have been squandered since. The national penchant for private acid and public blandness make it difficult to perceive the reasons for this strange failure. But the lessons which can be derived have applications beyond Fleet Street.

Little success has attended the Thomson family's undertakings to the Monopolies Commission — but not because they were not taken seriously. They were never adequately defined: misgivings based on experience were simply overridden. Specific commitments, like keeping the papers editorially separate, and maintaining *The Times'* most distinctive features — obituaries, law reports, letters — have been kept. The general commitments have not:

*To continue to publish *The Times* and the *Sunday Times* as quality papers edited in the national interest;
*To avoid changing the character of *The Times;*
*To develop *The Times* as a newspaper of record;
*To extend news coverage;
*To develop cultural interests;
*To observe a national duty to maintain the prestige of *The Times;*
*Not to allow quality to suffer in order to save money.

PERHAPS PRETENSION has done most harm. Before 1966 *The Times'* best virtues were unpretentious: disciplined, accurate writing, high quality printing and meticulous revision. Some of us found it possible to develop an individual style within these constraints: full editorial responsibility, and support of the staff under outside criticism, were upheld without question.

The Times was linked in various ways with other Astor interests. Nobody — whether in editorial, production or commercial work — joined it in order to get rich. But a bonus-earning pensions scheme was (in those days) a consolation.

There were exasperating problems, and some of them, though trivial, went to the top of the organisation for decision. A modest re-vamping of the paper in 1965 did little to enlarge its market. The Astors panicked and ran. The staff, right up to assistant editor, were remarkably ignorant about the sale.

The *Sunday Times* was quite different. Its production workers were largely casuals, and its editorial department recruited and created 'big names'. It had developed a new style of investigative reporting, scarcely adaptable to a daily paper's regime.

The merger was a commercial pun. Remains of *The Times'* senior management were fairly readily absorbed into a new company structure. Denis Hamilton, the *Sunday Times* editor, moved to chief executive, with Geoffrey Rowett as general manager. A handful of Thomson men took over *Times* editorial: chiefly William Rees-Mogg as editor, and Michael Cudlipp as assistant (later deputy) editor. Only Anthony Vice, editor of the new, separately-folded *Business News*, had any experience of *The Times*. Only Rowett had much systematic management training.

Numerous editorial recruits appeared, and by-lines proliferated. The end of an anonymous tradition was perhaps overdue, but the collective unbuttoning produced curious side-effects as efforts were made to push *Times* circulation to 500,000. *Times* journalists, at first wary, became appalled. The federated house chapel*

*Newspaper workers, including journalists, call their union branches 'chapels', after a usage initiated by printers.

had originally welcomed the Thomson rescue, but by 1970 — commercial objectives remaining elusive, and economies being felt — they were passing votes of no confidence.

Nonetheless, 1970 brought opportunities for continuing editorial and industrial improvement — had enough executives been able to perceive the situation in that light. In June the federated house chapel took part in a joint working-party with the Natsopa machine-room chapel, and management, on the closure of two presses with the loss of more than 100 'workings' — individual jobs for regular or casual employees. One condition was 13 weeks' notice or pay in lieu for any loss of paid work. (Natsopa contains a broad spectrum of mechanical and clerical workers: it is not a craft union like the National Graphical Association.)

On closure night the paper lost 54,000 copies: not, by Fleet Street standards, a high price for saving £400,000 a year. Some bridge-building followed, with regular information meetings begun by Rowett and John Dixey, the industrial relations director.

The next month, 30 senior journalists, finding that the sheer inanity of some parts of the paper had become unendurable, met at the White Swan in Farringdon Street and com-

The heavy mob: Lords Goodman and Thomson at No 10 during the 1970 press strike.

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posed a round robin for the editor.

> We recognise the need for innovation . . . and we agree that many of the things that have been changed needed to be changed. But the general effect of what has been done, and the manner in which it has been done, has been to diminish the authority, independence, accuracy, discrimination and seriousness of *The Times* . . .

They asked for consultation in advance of future changes. It was a key moment, but the editor's reaction was hostile and defensive. He met the White Swan signatories, but he was angry, and slurred his words.

He said the 30 represented no-one but themselves, and told them *The Times* could never have stumbled on without the Thomson rescue. Someone produced a comment which was respectful, and almost repudiated the letter. Rees-Mogg brightened-up fairly quickly, and everyone settled for consultation through the journalists' chapel.

Shortly afterwards, *The Times* reverted to a more sober presentation. A readership survey was quoted to support the move, and the signatories to the White Swan letter welcomed the fact without exploring the rationale. The letter had anyway been a departure from tolerant traditions.

Also in 1970 the journalists' chapel made a survey of membership opinion. About half replied. In all 110 said morale was low, 19 said it was adequate, and three said it was high; 115 said management was inadequate, 18 said it was adequate, and no-one said it was good. Out of 131, 120 said consultation before changes which affected journalists was inadequate, and 105 thought quality was not high enough as against 20 who thought it was.

This was the only systematic effort to discover the feelings of the editorial staff. The findings were given to the editor, but they were never discussed.

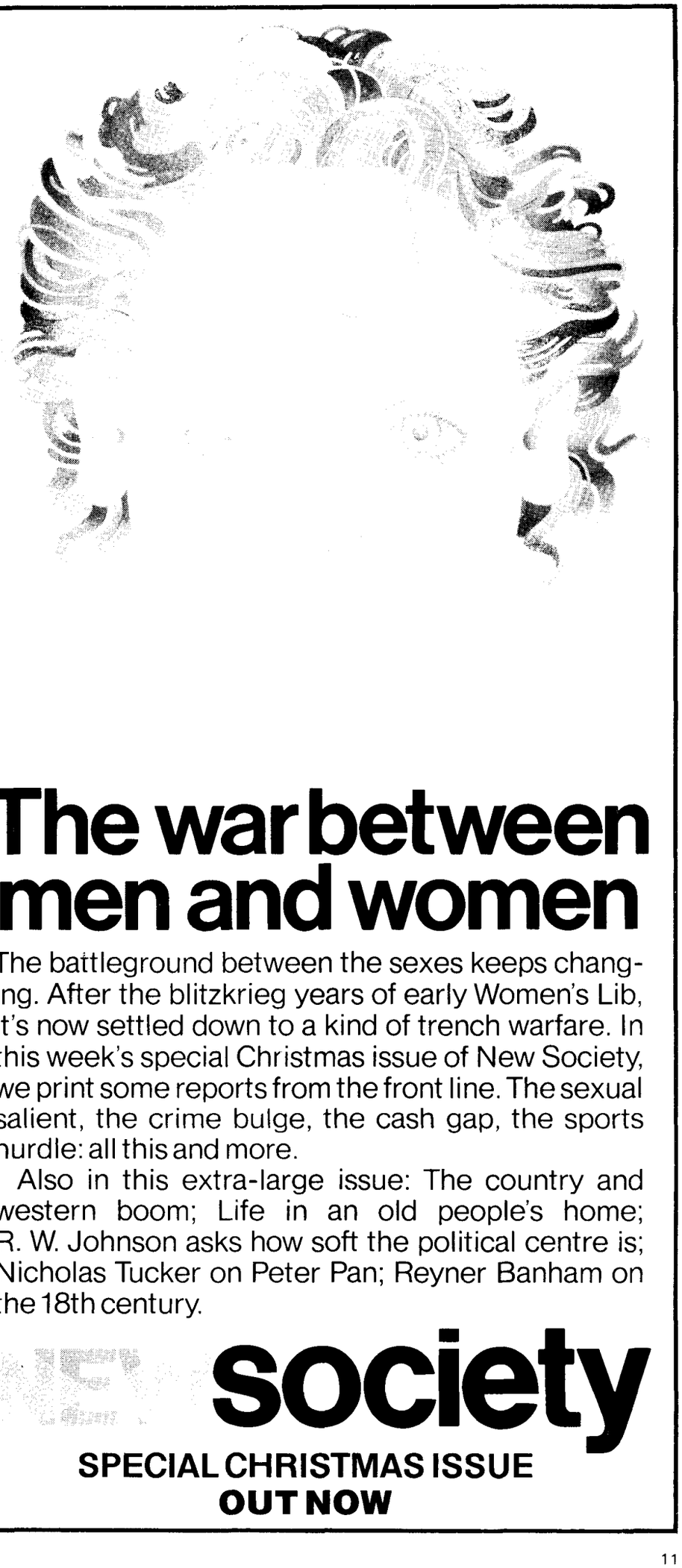
Unions, in effect, were trying to fill gaps in management practice — the federated house chapel did some tentative mediation and discussion in problem areas, like industrial-relations legislation and editorial practice. These activities were never secret, but without some response from authority the gaps were bound to remain: and after 1971 they became wider than ever before.

TWO IMPORTANT recruits arrived from Associated Newspapers — Duke Hussey as chief executive, and Bernard Levin as columnist, who had left the *Mail* after a dispute over his copy. In March 1971 Associated Newspapers announced the merger of the *Mail* and *Sketch,* with the loss of many editorial jobs. Levin wrote a ferocious attack on Vere Harmsworth, now Lord Rothermere.

The Times stood by Levin until a long, peculiar and costly libel action was settled out-of-court — after Rees-Mogg had appeared in person before the Appeal Court to plead for a jury trial, and various imputations against Duke Hussey's honour had been withdrawn. The Thomson family were mystified: 'I don't know what it's all about', Roy Thomson confessed to a Canadian visitor.

Meanwhile *The Times* lost a full edition over an internal dispute, something which had never happened before. Many of Bill Barnes' Natsopa machine-room members were still feeling their losses from 1970, and were aggrieved that nothing had been done about even heavier manning-levels on the *Sunday Times.* John Dixey

Cont. on p. 14


The war between men and women
The battleground between the sexes keeps changing. After the blitzkrieg years of early Women's Lib, it's now settled down to a kind of trench warfare. In this week's special Christmas issue of New Society, we print some reports from the front line. The sexual salient, the crime bulge, the cash gap, the sports hurdle: all this and more.
Also in this extra-large issue: The country and western boom; Life in an old people's home; R. W. Johnson asks how soft the political centre is; Nicholas Tucker on Peter Pan; Reyner Banham on the 18th century.
society
SPECIAL CHRISTMAS ISSUE
OUT NOW

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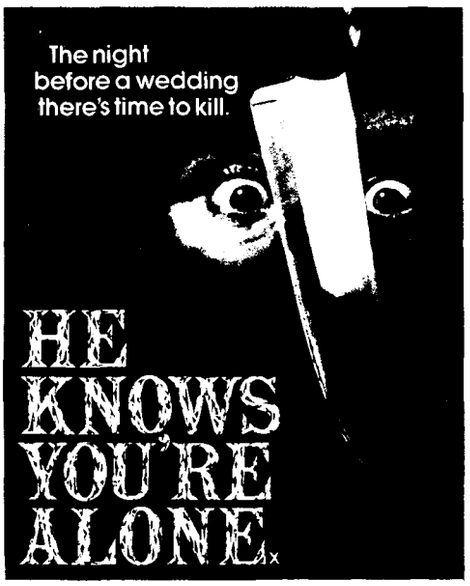
Women who ask for it

SALLY VINCENT reports on the defenders of male violence towards women.



THE REGAL in our High Street didn't do much trade last Wednesday. At the matinee showing of *He Knows You're Alone* there was the one meths drinker, savouring his fumes and minding his own business, plus a back-row of runty lads too wriggly to be counted but discreet enough to make themselves heard. From time to time they raised their voices, in a desultory way, to chant 'We want our money back', and occasionally some of them ran down the aisle in a manner suggestive of translating their desire into action. 'Na', called those who kept their seats, 'Be a good bit in a minnit'.

It soon became apparent that there was a pattern to their responses. Money-back excursions coincided exactly with the film's conversational passages. Belching, lipfarting, popcorn chucking and other lesser self-distractions went with more scenic moments, and the lads lapsed into comparatively silent satisfaction only when meat cleavers were actually scything in and out of women's bodies.

At the end of the entertainment they palely loitered round the ticket office to instruct potential customers that it was all a bloody boring take-on and they needn't bother paying for it. Clearly the film had neither taught them anything they didn't already know, nor illustrated their wisdom in any novel way. They had been bored. My own socks, too, had been quite bored off. Likewise the socks of all the companions who have shared my porno-violent feste these past few weeks. And boredom, as any Zen master will tell you, is only the generic root of anger. A sort of psychological device for pretending not to be offended.

ON THE EVIDENCE of current ripper movies, it would seem that those who manufacture them are sensitive to audience immunity both to explicit carnage and to the underwhelming repetitiousness of mad axe-men in pursuit of eternally helpless females. They know they must now offer more than ritual blood letting, but rather than neglect their expertise with ketchup cataracts they use them as a kind of crude smoke screen for an updated and far more insidious set of codings through which we may, if we wish, decipher our sexual destiny. Their new trick is bone simple. They merely shoot the whole caboodle entirely from the angle of the mad axe-man, thus indicating, with no trouble at all, the universality of Man as Ripper. The audience of a film like *He Knows You're Alone* is invited to identify and empathise with the killer; to try, in fact, to be him.

We see and hear the women in the film as though we were eavesdropping on them. We peep through the undergrowth to overhear their irreverent girlish chatter about men and male sexuality. We tippy-toe up behind them while they amuse themselves heartlessly upon the altar of masculine passion. And while we spy we learn they are naughty girls. They have no proper respect for men. They are *asking for it!* The audience is both voyeur and aggressor. At one point we actually follow a girl while she jogs through a wood. We see her vulnerable back, pick up her nervous tension. We keep pace, then move nearer and nearer. We approach precisely to the point of murder. The knife is right there in the audience's hand, the sense of vengeance up behind its eyeballs.

Murder becomes not only ritualized, but institutionalized as well. There is no arguing with it and no end to it. It is invariably the message with ripper entertainments that mad axe-men are unstoppable. The criminal is caught, certainly, but the crime lingers on and on . . . You think he's dead and his body unaccountably disappears *(Halloween)*. You think he's dead but he is merely preparing for his third coming *(The Shining)*. You think he's safely in custody but he's only inhabiting another body *(He Knows You're Alone)* or starring in your nightmares *(Dressed To Kill)*. The women in these films, the message goes, deserve their fate. They run for their lives, they trip up in their silly shoes, are caught and rubbed out. When they fight back they do so ineffectually. Any lull in the proceedings is temporary and illusory. No-one but another man can best the ripper. A detective, a kindly boy-friend, a son. Thus women are entirely dependent, as victims or as survivors, upon men. Men, in other words, control women. Female self-assertiveness, the coda runs, is its own punishment; dependency its own reward.

A MAN, OR A TEAM of men, will eventually solve the Yorkshire Ripper case and all the other ripper cases presently suggesting that life imitates art. Yet I doubt our perception of rape-murder will be altered one jot. It will remain a crime that women alone will have to suffer, or be saved from, by virtue of men. We are as incurious about the nature of the real life beast as we are of his screen image. The one does not imitate the other, merely affirms him and our own acceptance of his inevitability.

Press reporting of real-life rippings, meanwhile, continues to underwrite the moral tone expressed in ripper films. We have long been inured to the crass innocence of the more popular tabloids, and their consistent presentation of the notion that one woman's slaughter is less or more consequential than another's, and all of them perfectly comprehensible, really. One such report in recent weeks managed to include in its front-page, hundred-word precis of the butchering of a teen-age girl, the significant (to them) fact that she was 'fashion-conscious'. Newspaper accounts of rape-murders are invariably at pains to suggest there is something more piteous in the violation of a 'respectable' woman than we need bother to feel for a woman who is no better than she should be and therefore a prime example of the She-Asked-For-It syndrome. Perhaps the most eloquent expression of moral tone came from *The Times,* which announced simply 'Ripper Claims Thirteenth Victim'. Accustomed to the care and precision with which that institution selects its phrases, it is difficult to imagine the verb was unintentional. To claim, after all, means to demand one's rightful due. On whose behalf then, does the ripper make his claim? To whom or what are his victims owed?

It seems that the ripper figure in our midst is regarded, in some deeply mysterious way, as less aberrant, socially, than his victims. Of course he is wicked; but is he mad?

Not surprisingly the mad-or-bad question has always been highly popular in police circles, and the preferred conclusion of those entrusted to keep our peace for us falls heavily on the side of badness. 'Bad' fits the old Bill, it seems, not least because 'mad' implies an excuse for appalling conduct which cannot possibly carry with it any punishment. It is altogether too feeble a condemnation. Besides, 'bad' is more persuasive in that it protects our notion of the ubiquitous nature of man, whether he is good *or* bad. A good man is only he who manages to wilfully control his perfectly normal urge to flatten women, a bad man he who just as wilfully fails to do so. To make a greater distinction between them would call into question not only violent criminality but the whole gamut of blowless battering of women upon which smiling, confident sexism breeds in so many ordinary men. Let us, then, not call any man mad.

One high-ranking policeman of my acquaintance put it this way. 'Ask yourself this', he said, with what he took to be impeccable logic. 'Would this ripper chappie have murdered these women if a policeman had been watching him?' And 'No!' he answered himself in triumph. 'So, he's not so mad them, is he? He knows the difference between right and wrong!'

Thereby hangs the sacrosanct imperative of male psychology. All men, it assumes, are tempted to do violent, cruel things to women, but the good ones have a little policeman on point duty in their heads to warn them of the

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consequences of such deeds. The bad men freely choose to ignore him and must therefore be controlled by other policemen. What would be lost by a general questioning of the psychopathy of men who brutalize female strangers is the cosmic acceptance of the sanity of their motivation. Within our conventional sexual mythology it is written that while it is unreasonable for a man to give in to his wish to molest, attack, rape and bash to death the nearest nubile female, it is reasonable for him to harbour the desire. For that, as the policeman sees it, is what civilised man is all about. And civilisation, precisely as it lives and breathes today, is what all our policemen are dedicated to protect. And as a last resort a civilised man can always defend himself against such disturbances as introspection by invoking the status quo.

This killer, that killer, real and imaginary, will be halted in the fullness of time but his crime will survive. Women must remain conventionally and rightly in peril, under constant threat and forever afraid. The more powerful women become in society, the more independent of men, the heavier the need to stress the reprisals they are calling down on their own heads. The scales we choose to see before our eyes must be balanced precisely as they have always been, or chaos will come.

SHOULD ANYONE begin to take seriously the cause and effect of such movies as *He Knows You're Alone*, they must be instantly pooh-poohed as spoil-sports, over-earnest intellectual sillies, post-menopausal cranks or bearded feminists. It is acceptable to call for censorship, which is only another way of pretending nothing is happening, but foolishly mischievous to question the ways in which a free society chooses to maintain its status quo. Either way, though, the ordinary mind is persuaded to clamp down the debate and accept that we might as well accept the way things are. We are all perfectly free to go and see films dedicated to the celebration of the ritual rape-murder of woman, but we must be on our guard about taking them seriously, because once we do we are actually tampering with the hallowed institution of rape-murder of women by men as a means of warning women to keep their heads down, not to get uppity, to take what they're given and obey . . . Or Else.

When the Ripper retires or is safely policed away, we will undoubtedly know as little about him as we do now. We will know him by his absence until another lunatic assumes his mantle and acts out the impulses of his fellow men. Society's most important message will continue to be affirmed: there is nothing, absolutely nothing, wrong with male psychology or male sexuality. He who must be obeyed (and she who would obey him) will brook no discussion of HIM. And as for the rest of you, keep looking over your shoulder.

I wonder, though, if there might not have been something more to be gleaned from the back-row yobs in the High Street cinema. They were, if the leisure to be entertained on a weekday afternoon is anything to go by, unemployed or unemployable; outcasts, at any rate, from the society whose expression of backlash conservatism they are watching. And their most insistent cry was to be given their money back. Might there not be something in the old psychologists' saw that money is love, displaced? And might not, therefore, their loutish cat-callings have constituted the most sensible and optimistic comment to have so far arisen from the climate of our present reign of terror?

Spectator

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The Times

Cont. from p. 11

had suggested action, but Hussey saw no point when the Sunday paper was making money. (Dixey also thought the company should leave the Newspaper Publishers' Association, so as to tackle its own problems directly. Hussey replied that one should never resign from a club until thrown out.)

In spring, the separate folding of *Business News* was dropped, for economy, but as Rees-Mogg hoped to resume it, the bonus for extra machine-room work was continued to July. Then the company gave notice of its immediate end.

Barnes protested that 13 weeks' notice, or pay, was due. The company said the bonus had been paid without work for more than 13 weeks. The chapel said the bonus had been given for being *prepared* to do the extra work: it was an essentially soluble dispute.

The weather was very hot, producing much dermatitis in the machine room through volatility of the chemicals in paper and ink. The Astors had a benevolent connection with the Middlesex Hospital, and in the past such discomforts had meant the arrival of a nurse, or even a doctor. This time the men were told to find their own doctors. They walked out.

Neither the dispute nor the dermatitis caused the stoppage, and strike-triggers often — perhaps always — seem trivial. But enterprises go sour in small parcels. Paternalism, when exhausted, must be replaced, not merely destroyed.

THE NIGHTLY CEREMONY of the editor seeing the paper away in the composing-room may have seemed 'condescending'. But it was valued, and Sir William Haley was proud of his familiarity with production methods. Rees-Mogg, caring little for such things, ended the ceremony, but put nothing in its place.

Years later, composing-room workers remember the night when he turned up with some friends to show them the paper in production. Rees-Mogg and his guests were in evening dress. One guest asked: 'Who is that man? What does he do?' Rees-Mogg said he didn't know, and asked a supervisor.

Two electricians were passing, and one said, indicating the editor: 'Who is that man? What does he do?' The other electrician said: 'He doesn't know.'

In September that year, the National Graphical Association pursued a pay claim through the means of mandatory chapel-meetings close to deadline, NPA companies being hit in turn. One night, the copies lost at *The Times* ran to six figures, but a couple of nights later the NGA chapels met for only a few minutes, and no copies were lost at all.

At the weekend, the *Times* men were locked out with all other NGA members in the national press. Duplicate keys were available, and if the journalists had been prepared to join with the other unions, a work-in could have produced the paper. It did not, but the possibility was evidence of a cohesion for which management might still have taken some credit.

But things were disintegrating, and the decision had been announced to move to the new building at Gray's Inn Road. There was a huge list of industrial issues which would arise from the move alone, and its original rationale — the need for more circulation capacity — no longer existed.

Rowett left early in 1972, and shortly afterwards the NUJ had a difficult dismissal case, where by accident an April Fool skit got into the paper. Rees-Mogg and Hussey published a repudiation, and decided upon dismissal, before the matter had been investigated: a compromise was patched up, but the contrast with Levin's case was stark, and another tradition was eroded. I resigned from the staff a year later, frustrated and tired by the complicated treadmill.

THE MOVE was made in 1974 with a mass of unresolved issues that were still causing stoppages four years later. Bill Barnes was suspended, and later disqualified from office by Natsopa. Most of the other 'federally-minded' chapel leaders resigned or retired, and John Dixey left as well.

During the count-down to the lockout of 1978, I went into the office at the normal evening-rush time and found Rees-Mogg standing alone in the empty sub-editors room. I asked what was wrong.

'Another silly parochial dispute in the machine-room — in breach of agreement, but the branch and national officers have washed their hands. What we need is a restoration of authority in this country'.

He had tried so hard to be an editor in the *Times* tradition, as he saw it. He believed that most of what had gone wrong would not have gone wrong if respect for authority had prevailed. So did Hussey, who had been an officer in the Grenadiers, and Hamilton, who had been on Montgomery's staff. Yet they were powerless.

Power is the ability to influence people or events. Authority is the licence, given by an organisation, to try to obtain that influence. Sometimes unacceptable authority faces unauthorised power: authority must then either win it over or try to suppress it. To win it over requires contact, sensitivity, patience, and above all understanding. Frustrated authority is destructive, but uncomprehending authority is even worse. In this country, it is in a particularly destructive phase.

In April 1978 *The Times* published the company's letter of intent on suspension of publication (it had already been leaked to the *Guardian*). It complained that the executive board spent so much time on disputes that they had to scamp other work.

That night, I visited *The Times* composing room. One badly de-skilled job for a craftsman on current technology is drying mats. He takes the moist papier-mache on which type has been impressed, pops it into an oven for 15 seconds, and takes it out when a bell rings, whereon he sends in down a chute to the foundry for plate-making.

The man on the job that night had 14 years *Times* experience, and had noticed that each year things got later. The letter puzzled him.

'If they're that worried about us, why do we never see them? I'd have a bit to say. You've plenty of time to talk on this job. Why didn't they write that to us?'

The editorial staff were spared phrases like 'obsolescent skills', but in 1975 a theatre critic at an industrial tribunal said a *Times* sub-editor was a 'word mechanic', and 'Jake' Ecclestone became leader of the NUJ chapel in that year against a background of growing dissatisfaction. He has specialised in being a unionist, accepting demotion in order to find sufficient time. Now, standing for election as NUJ assistant general secretary, he claims to have run one of the biggest chapels in the union and 'turned it into one of the most effective'.

Some colleagues believe that editorial mismanagement 'created' Ecclestone's career. Others believe he represents *The Times* as the editor does not, and point to the public statements exchanged after the *Times* journalists' strike in August.

The strike appears to have been decisive in making Thomsons pull out. The journalists insisted on a 21 per cent pay rise which had been sanctified by arbitration, and the company insisted that 18 per cent was the limit. Apparently the idea of a staged settlement occured to no-one in time to avert a walk-out. It was only a little less daft than the machine-room affair in 1971.

BETWEEN THE STRIKE and the sale announcement, Rees-Mogg on television was asked a hoary question. How could journalists pontificate about other people's problems while newspapers made such a hash of their own?

He replied that there was only a thin crust of journalists on the heaving, seething cauldron of Fleet Street, and they could not stop writing about things because they did not manage the cauldron. He added that he was glad he was not a manager, since being an editor was bad enough.

This is pure nonsense. There must be some minimum co-operation between different interests in any business: authority and control must bear some relationship to functions. The sarcastic electrician and the man drying the mats are not demanding equality. There is something else.

To an old colleague in September I recalled the difficulties I had felt when, as leader of the NUJ chapel, I experienced things which ran clean counter to what the paper expected me to write as labour editor. 'Surely you didn't believe it?' he smiled.

I did, and do. One of the most-quoted paragraphs I wrote was:

> Discipline without appeal, change without warning, judgment without accountability, advancement without training, employment without opportunity for growth, or the reliance on private admonition to enforce or distort a relationship: these are all, unfortunately, common aspects of industrial behaviour which are injudicious, pathological or both. A basic code of good practice, however prissy it may seem, must give clear guidance on avoiding those faults in specific situations, or it is not worth a button.

That was printed in *The Times* nearly ten years ago: a pity that the paper was becoming a test-bed to show that the words were not just rant. The house those faults have almost destroyed will take considerable rebuilding.

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Fun between the covers

FRANCES WHEEN examines one newspaper's coverage of the world in 1980.

CRITICS of the *Sun,* pointing to its unlovely qualities — political toadyism, arrant newsbias and the like — are apt to forget its role as a public service. The *Sun* cares tenderly for its 12-million flock, dispensing for 12p a day advice upon every aspect of their lives. It happens there is no aspect without sexuality — or what passes in tabloid minds for sexuality — and the nature of the advice deserves examination.

Only the two orthodox sexes are beneficiaries so far, and let us begin with the men: by way of the *Sun* 'Girl-Catcher's Guide', published in April, written by Roslyn Grose, and based on an 'idea' by Tuppy Owens, inventor of *The Sex Maniac's Diary.*

> Men who are good in bed combine passion with sensitive manners.
>
> They caress their new lady between the sheets, whispering naughty little compliments as their hands go further.
>
> They do not plunge about, then hiss, 'Do you like this?'
>
> Anybody with an ounce of gumption ought to be able to tell what she likes and then keep on doing it.

Words, presumably, are not being wasted, so there must have been evidence of undue plunging and hissing by uninstructed *Sun*persons. Grose issues further stern commands on etiquette:

> Never apologise for the state of the sheets. Simply scatter after-shave on them while she is in the bathroom and she will think your bed is always scented.

Or that you shave in bed? Grose, however, is aware that matters cannot reach this technical stage without some preliminary capework. **You'll never get her as far as bed,** the male is told with typographic emphasis, **if you don't know how to chat her up.**

> Some girls relish being wined and dined . . . but when it comes to the moment you have been working up to all night, they have only one thing to say. 'Why should I?' they ask.

Ms Grose has a quiverful of winning responses. **It will help us to get to know each other better,** or **We will both enjoy the ultimate thrills of love together,** or **Because I've wanted you all evening,** or **It will make our life more exciting.** And the last appeal, if all else fails, should be therapeutic: **Because I want you so much I've got a pain.**

The erotic will should then be sustained by suitable choice of music (*Help Me Make It Through the Night,* etc) and also, according to 'Food For Loving' (an article published in May), by remembering that 'you can have a super sex life on a plate if you eat and drink the right things'.

> . . . Shrimps and prawns have always enjoyed a reputation to encourage amorous adventures, but the most passion-producing seafood is the oyster. The very sight of an oyster can arouse naughty thoughts.

Then vegetables should be remembered because 'their erotic shape' may [illegible] tain parts of the body'. Listed are globe artichokes, asparagus, beans, carrots, celery, garlic and onions. The anatomical [illegible] curious; the choice of asparagus seems especially demoralising.

Cherries, apricots and mangoes ('best eaten in the bath with your loved one') will be found useful, also herbs such as basil ('used in voodoo love ceremonies'). Still, tedium may supervene, so in October a *Sun* special counselled on avoidance of 'bedroom boredom'. Men, before going to work, should sow the house with messages like 'See you tonight, Hot Lips'. But woman's role, as ever, is more complex:

> On Sunday mornings, when you are both lying in bed, pop out to get the papers wearing nothing but a raincoat. Let him think of you out in public, naked under your thin mac . . .

Apparel may be as critical as vegetable choice, but the *Sun* line is not consistent. In July it recommended 'floaty chiffon nighties with matching lacy briefs', but October's nightwear was old cardigans, football socks, men's shirts and 'raincoats and wellies'. Fresh instructions a few days later were: 'Sleep in the nude'. But next month:

> Don't give your loved one the cold shoulder — make love in your dressing-gown, but nothing else.

What nature of male beast is apt to be ensnared by wiles like these? The *Sun* offers a typology: perhaps The Belittler, the Sexual Acrobat, the Little Boy Lost, the Cliffhanger, or even the Schizo Lover:

> A fascinating fella who walks the fine line between genius and craziness . . . He is like a pole vaulter at the Sex Olympics . . . This man is an angel and a monster . . . If you find yourself addicted only to him, you have let love become a drug . . .

What to do: the *New Statesman,* at this point, will offer a little advice. Grab your dressing-gown and your wellies, throw the oysters and mangoes into a holdall, and fade silently but expeditiously into the night.

John Minnion

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London Diary

☐ Who really makes foreign policy in this country? In public, the government drags its feet over the issue of Palestinian statehood. Mrs Thatcher is known for her strong prejudice against the PLO. Britain's contribution to the Venice summit was very lukewarm. Yet David Steel recently sent Lord Carrington a copy of his own report on the Middle East. It calls for the establishment of a homeland in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. It also advocates recognition of the PLO. On 26 November Lord Carrington replied. I have a copy of his letter.

> Dear David, Thank you very much for your letter of 17 November and for sending us copies of the report of your Middle East tour. Ian Gilmour and Douglas Hurd were also interested to see the report and I am replying on behalf of us all.
>
> If I may say so, the report is an excellent piece of work. The department has read it with great interest and we would not take issue with any of your main conclusions. Yours, Peter (Carrington).

But the FCO persists in denying that such a consensus exists. Who is in charge?

☐ It was, I think, Leon Trotsky who remarked that what distinguished a revolutionary was not his willingness to kill but his readiness to die. Tariq Ali, author of *Trotsky for Beginners,* doesn't strike me as having made this distinction in his defence (*NS* 12 December) of the Republican hunger-strikers. Terence MacSwiney, the mayor of Cork who starved to death in protest at British trickery and injustice, was an elected and popular representative of the people, who never hurt a fly. The Provisional IRA are sectarians and murderers with no electoral support in any part of Ireland. I receive much propaganda about the H Block detainees. Sometimes their supporters call them 'political prisoners' and sometimes they term them 'prisoners of war'. Well, which? Are we being asked to believe that they are innocent, or invited to think that their crimes against civilians were 'justified'? And should the thugs of the UDA and UVF get 'political status' as well? I think the Provisionals and their supporters should come clean on these points. They may have got some recent sympathy for their readiness to die, but it is their willingness to kill which has attracted most notice up to now.

☐ Of course, the British government has made everything worse with its policy of torture, no-jury courts and U-turns on 'special category'. It has also made things intolerable by its flagrant bias towards the 'Loyalist' gunmen. Humphrey Atkins, a man whose ability to find his way to the House of Commons is a constant source of wonder to his friends, made a remark the other day which, while not reported much here, was not lost on the Catholics of the Six Counties. He was asked his opinion of the recent rash of murders, inflicted on defenceless Catholics by Unionist ultras. He replied that he condemned the murders utterly, and felt that they played into the hands of 'the terrorists'. WHAT? Not since Suez has any Tory minister said a more criminal or stupid thing. Nor a more revealing one — if the shooting of Catholic civilians is not terrorism then what is it? (Tommy McKearney, one of the most critically ill of the hunger-strikers, lost two members of his family in that way.) I have actually seen British soldiers controlling crowds with the help of hooded UDA men, but I'd never seen it put on the record that Stormont Castle defines terror as that which is done in the Republican cause.

☐ The conviction of 'Lord' Kagan brings close to double figures the number of Wilson cronies who fell foul of the law. Miller, Brayley, Sternberg — the line goes on to the crack of doom. The Tory papers are naturally very divided. On the one hand, these men are friends of Wilson and often have slightly un-English names. To that extent they are traditional fair game. On the other hand, they are wealth creators and, like the Vesteys, should be cheered on for whatever they can get away with. The director of Aims of Industry, nice Michael Ivens, wrote a moving defence of Kagan before the trial began, and clearly regards him as a buccaneering entrepreneur and all the rest of it. I see that Lady Falkender has still not made her maiden speech in the House of Lords. Might not this be the perfect moment to break silence and explain, under the immunity of Parliament, exactly what has been going on?

☐ Talk of tax evasion brings me to the consideration of Tom Benyon MP. He is by no means a pretty sight, and in the ordinary course of events I wouldn't inflict him on you; it's a bit like finding a dead mouse at the bottom of your Guinness. But he's just made a remark which must be passed on. Benyon was a founder director of the Rossminster Group, the tax evasion specialists who seem to have cost the Exchequer about £1000m in lost revenue. He was asked recently about their activities and said:

> Suffice it to say that I believe that under a socialist government, when penal and confiscatory tax rates were levied on grounds of social justice rather than revenue rating, and were damaging in terms of incentive and the emigration of talent, people were justified in arranging their affairs within the law so as to attract less tax.

Suffice it to say *exactly* that. I hope all union negotiators will cut it out and take it to the next Downing Street talks.

☐ On Boxing Day 1943 the Nazi warship *Scharnhorst* was sunk by the Royal Navy. The *coup de grace* was delivered, by means of torpedo tubes, from HMS *Jamaica.* On board at the time was Commander Eric Hitchens, with whom six years later I celebrated my first Christmas. A few nights ago the surviving *Jamaica* officers held a reunion party, and my father astonished me by inviting me along. I needn't have been nervous, because the organiser, Dudley Blunt, gave me several drinks and told me a number of stories (the best of which concerned his announcing the sinking of the *Bismarck* over a local radio station in Shanghai, and being rescued from the building when it was attacked by the German community). As Edward Thompson once wrote, the 'Hollywoodisation' of the last war has obscured some heroic realities, and understated the quality of the men involved in those realities. The Arctic convoys to Russia were an imperishable episode of that type, though I don't think my father ever expected to find himself running guns to Joe Stalin. Anyway, I raise my glass to my hosts, especially the one who told me that on the day of Hiroshima he wondered why nobody seemed to be worried.

☐ What nonsense has been written about Oswald Mosley. 'Could have been leader of either major party' indeed! The man couldn't even organise a successful racialist by-election. His sole achievement was the importing of fear and misery into the lives of some Jewish families, and the adding of some colour to the lives of exceedingly nasty middle-class youngsters. I spent an afternoon with him once in a television studio; he was charming but deadly dull and could only talk about himself. Then he got on the set, altered his tone and pitch and delivered a burst of cloacal abuse against the Ugandan Asians. So I think I saw both Mosleys that day, and can see why some people didn't credit the stories they heard from the East End. However many Mosleys there actually were, good riddance to the lot of them.

☐ I met Norman Mailer at a party last weekend, and talked with him a bit about the feel of Reagan's America. Like a lot of people in the States, he is apprehensive about the return of a McCarthy type atmosphere. One can see why. Strom Thurmond will be heading the Senate Judiciary Committee in the next Congress, and intends to revive the Internal Security Subcommittee, which was abolished four years ago. He is going to place it in the hands of the Senator-elect from Alabama, a Moral Majority dingbat named Jeremiah Denton. Under Senator Eastland from Mississippi, that committee achieved a combination of notoriety and absurdity for its invigilation of radicals. Perhaps now it will reappear as the farce of 'Uncle Strom's Cabin'.

☐ Johnny Torode was a good man. As founder of the old Sign and Display Trades Union he had a following much larger than his membership, and took on big antagonists. He fought publicly with Ernest Bevin over Manchuria, and went on through later years as he had begun. His sons, together with Lord Wedderburn and other distinguished trade union figures, are hoping to set up a fund for a memorial lecture. The Torode Memorial Trust is at 25 Platts Lane, London NW3.

☐ Nobody points out that the coverage of Lady Diana Spencer is thoroughly permeated with sexual bigotry (or sexism if you must). It is assumed that she obviously wants to wed the Prince, and is only waiting shyly to be asked. Perhaps she doesn't fancy marrying into that lumpish Hanoverian set. A friend recently staying at Balmoral reports that Prince Philip's favourite parlour game is the insertion of a bottle between his legs. Females in the room are then challenged to remove the suggestive flagon, using only their own lower limbs for the purpose. If the Spencer family have any breeding at all they will forbid the banns.

Christopher Hitchens

This England

Prizes: £3 book token for first entry, £2 tokens for others printed. Paste entries on a postcard.

☐ My husband recently had a vasectomy, as our family of two boys is now complete. For a surprise Christmas present I would like to get him a tie with a vasectomy symbol on it. Do you know where I might buy one?—Letter in *TV Times* (J. Edwin MacDonald)

☐ Discount store owner Mrs Kathleen Smith added: 'I am absolutely disgusted with the idea of a sex shop, especially on the main road and near to schools. Some people say it is just a bit of fun, but that is rubbish. When has sex been fun?' — *Burnley Evening Star* (G.Moor)

☐ During my conversation last week Mr Shea called the item in the *Sunday Mirror* ' a nasty little story'. It could also be seen as an attack on the honour of the Royal Train. — *Sunday Telegraph* (W.A.Payne)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Parliament of Fools

From Councillor Phil Molyneux

As someone who attended most of the Private Rented Sector parts of the Housing Bill Standing Committee discussion, I enjoyed Monica Ferman's article ('The Tragicomedy of the Housing Bill,' *NS* 21 November) almost as much as Gerald Kaufman's book, *How to be a Minister*. However, there were some points that puzzled me.

First, she writes that Kaufman said 'Yes' when asked if he'd rather properties remained empty than go into Shorthold. While this may be doomed to enter the reference books, it is a travesty of the actual quotation and the particular issue. Kaufman's reply to Stanley's question was (13 March 1980 col 1110, Committee Hansard): 'It is far better for potentially tenanted properties to be empty than for a tenant to be at the mercy of whatever a landlord is ready to impose on him every month in the bogus name of agreement.' In the context of her article I would have thought that the important issue was whether the Standing Committee was able to find out how many properties were being kept empty due to landlords' (real or imaginary) fears about the Rent Acts. Indeed, Labour MPs pressed the Government to publish the 1977 Empty Property Survey to settle the issue and Stanley said (11 March col 1030 Committee Hansard): ' . . . I shall certainly see if there is any possibility of having it available at the Report Stage, which would obviously be helpful.' It was not made available on Report stage (20 May) but was released a few days after the Housing Bill became an Act, revealing that only about 8,000 to 31,000 properties were kept empty because of the Rent Acts, out of a total of 550,000 vacant dwellings. These data expose the bogus Tory argument for Shorthold and could surely have been 'made available' in time.

This incident and others in Monica Ferman's article reveal the impotence of a Standing Committee to discuss the merits of an issue where the Government has fixed views. But is it not naive to expect otherwise when a government has a firm majority for its ideas and the full resources of the Civil Service? Surely one of the aims of a Standing committee is to determine those areas of policy dispute which are perhaps negotiable and the point of Monica Ferman's anecdotes is that this Government is hardly willing to move from any of its extreme positions.

I certainly found the Committee stage and Report stage discussions a useful arena to instigate publicity on particular issues affecting my constituents. Both Tilley and Kaufman, for example, used material that I had lobbied them with to gain press coverage for issues which I, as a mere backbench councillor, could never have achieved. The attention-seeking and educative roles of MPs may well involve theatricals but they are important none the less.

7a Alexandra House, St Mary's Terrace, London W2

Next week: Jack Straw, a member of the Standing Committee, replies to Monica Ferman's article.

Orwell v Martin

From John Peter

It is all very well for Paul Johnson (*NS* 5 December) to dismiss what Christopher Hitchens says on the grounds of Hitchens's age and political convictions (not usually a sign that one feels sure of one's argument); the question is whether Hitchens is right or not. Now I personally do not care one iota whether Paul Johnson is one of Mrs Thatcher's 'leading blowhards': in my book there are far worse things to be. But his letter raises a fundamental moral point which goes beyond whether Kingsley Martin was or was not a 'left-wing poseur'. It is this: Martin rejected Orwell's review because he, Martin, wished 'that one side might win rather than the other side' in the Spanish Civil War. Orwell's review shed unfavourable light on the side which Martin backed and Martin therefore rejected it. For him to compare Orwell to Goebbels in this context, however obliquely, and for Johnson to quote him approvingly, is atrocious: after all, Orwell had risked his life on the Republican side. The fact is that Martin's political zeal, in itself honourable, led him to the kind of political and intellectual dishonesty which is the first step to totalitarianism. I cannot imagine that a rugged radical like Paul Johnson would have stood for it if he had been in Orwell's place.

Sunday Times, 200 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1

Out goes the good doctor

From Bob Quick, Regional Officer, COHSE North West Region

In the wake of Jane Leighton's item last week (*NS* 12 December) regarding the sacking of Liverpool AHA's officer Duncan Dalton, allow me firstly to voice my personal anger at this Authority's despicable act of political savagery and secondly clarify a point raised in the article. Although the AHA originally accepted the idea put forward by the TUC unions to send a delegation to the Health Minister (with a jointly-prepared brief about the joint concern over general and specific underfunding) it recently overturned the idea (using the inbuilt Tory/Liberal majority) saying that the exercise would be a waste of time and that the chairman (another Tory) had already met (and probably dined) with the Minister.

The same chairman, when asked some months ago at an AHA meeting if there was any chance of the cuts being reversed, replied: 'Only if there is a change of government.'

Prestwich, Manchester 25

NS and Northern Ireland

From Peter Milne

The cover picture of an Irish hunger striker (*NS* 28 November) heralded, or so I thought, a long overdue *NS* survey of the Northern Ireland scene. Well, there was an editorial and a not very long article by Mary Holland.

The editorial admonished all for their apathy, and made a number of generalisations with which, I predict, few will rush to disagree. There did not seem to be any advice for the authorities apart from the whimsical suggestion that the government should admit the UK had got off to a bad start in having been seen to have intervened on behalf of the Protestants. Such a public admission of past error, though welcome, would not cut much ice.

The article by Mary Holland read like a voice-over for one of those strenuously objective pieces of TV reportage. The only conclusions I could detect were that tensions in Northern Ireland are higher than they have been for some years and that time is short. Even the BBC Nine O'Clock News has been saying as much.

It is not in the tradition of *NS* to be bland and I hope the subject will receive better coverage in coming issues.

47 Roderick Road, London NW3

Propose a new Chancellor

From Richard Balfe, MEP

On Tuesday 2 December, the Queen Mother tendered her resignation as Chancellor of the University of London. Past students of London University who have taken a degree and become a Member of Convocation are entitled to elect a successor. The Standing Committee of Convocation is making the Recommendation that Princess Anne, Mrs Mark Phillips, be invited to accept nomination for the office of Chancellor.

I do not believe that Princess Anne is the best person to hold the senior position in the University of London, and I would be interested in hearing from any other Members of Convocation who might be prepared to discuss the proposition of an alternative candidate.

259 Barry Road, London SE22

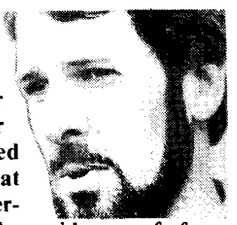
Afghanistan

From Fred Halliday

It was a surprise to see that you had introduced my article on Afghanistan (*NS* 5 December) with the headline 'The limits of Russian imperialism'. I do not think that a socialist assessment of Soviet foreign policy, of its strengths and failings, can be based upon a use of the category 'imperialism'. Nor, so far as I recall, was this the headline upon which we had previously agreed. I trust that it was an accident.

London

Violence at the Conservative Party conference



Last month in the New Statesman, Lord Bruce of Donington wrote about the affair of Michael Carver (right), who heckled Margaret Thatcher at the Tory Party Conference. He quoted the evidence of four distinguished journalists who saw Carver being set upon by security men and carried unconscious from the hall under the noses of the Tory front bench and without his assailants being apprehended by the police. The government, in the form of Lord Belstead, at first denied both this version of events and Carver's own account of what happened to him while in police custody for six hours. We have received two letters casting further light on what actually happened to Michael Carver.

From T.P. Hickey

I read Lord Bruce's account of the Carver affair (*NS* 21 November) with interest, not least because I was the other 'Socialist Workers Party demonstrator' escorted from the conference hall. It is the interpretation of the Sussex police that I find particularly intriguing. It is claimed by them that Carver walked unaided to a police vehicle and that, during the journey to the police station, he talked to the officer accompanying him about his possession of a conference pass. I find this strange because I was being interviewed in the police station assembly room when Carver was carried in by two uniformed police officers. His eyes were only half open and his feet were dragging behind him. I saw him propped against a wall on distinctly rubbery legs and supported by one of the officers. He was photographed in this condition without being given any opportunity to object.

Now, it is not impossible that he could have collapsed on entering the police station, but is it really credible? There is also a strange coincidence. When *I* was removed from the conference centre *I* walked about 100 yards to a police van unaided, and during the journey was asked by my escorting officer about how I got to the conference. It occurs to me that the police account could be a confusion of two arrests.

Flat 1, 97 Lewes Road, Ditchling, E. Sussex

From Michael Beckham

There is ample evidence to justify Lord Bruce's concern over the severity of the assault on Michael Carver. Filming for Granada TV, I found myself only a few yards from Carver. Next to me stood a Sussex police inspector. In his attempt to heckle, Carver managed only one sentence: 'I am out of work.' He was then thrown to the floor apparently by stewards and then punched and kicked by delegates. In all it lasted 10 seconds, but by then the protester was unconscious and being carried away face down.

35 Trinity Church Square, London SE1

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ARTHUR MARSHALL

Christmas crackers

Opposed as I am to almost all forms of change and sadly noting in the modern world this or that alteration or withdrawal of an amenity (drinking-troughs for horses, for example, always such a pleasing and watery attraction in a town's main street), I much regret the total disappearance in large shops of floor-walkers. These tall and black-jacketed gentlemen, who all looked like reputable Victorian cabinet ministers, were especially numerous in Selfridges and, sighting a customer, would come gliding smoothly forward, anxious to help. You stated your requirement ('Winter vests, please, chest 42'), upon which, and to a cry of 'Forward please, Miss Babbacombe', you were wafted to the right counter and offered a chair to sit on (chairs have also disappeared, and even counters seem to be on the way out and those square loose-boxes curtly labelled PAY HERE are not the same thing at all). And I find deeply depressing the notice saying THIEVES WILL BE PROSECUTED, which I always misread as PERSECUTED — much the same thing. There are certainly in Fortnum's, shop of shops, some men who *look* like floor-walkers but I have never liked, on my way to Preserves, to ask them if they are.

Quite a jolly game for the snug winter fireside, curtains drawn and nothing on the telly, is to suggest occupations that famous people might, judging solely by their exteriors, have been busy with if they hadn't been what they were, if you follow me, lucidity itself as usual. Thus, the enchanting little songbird, Edith Piaf, might have been taken for a pre-war boy or girl *ramasseuse* or picker-up of tennis balls at the equivalent of a bob an hour on the courts at Cannes. Goethe could, from the likenesses available and having the necessary gloomy face for it, easily have been an undertaker ('I've come to measure Herr Baumgarten up') and cheating a bit on the side too, with coloured and stained beech masquerading as oak. I see Mussolini as a rather shifty travel-agent, all toothy smiles over the bogus holiday brochures ('Benidorm it shall be then') and leaning over the counter the better to appreciate a neatly turned female ankle. Lloyd George was obviously a highly successful open-air auctioneer and Stanley Baldwin a genial bank manager, puffing that pipe and all confident smiles prior to refusing an overdraft at some such place as Staines. Mrs Baldwin, on the other hand, must surely have been a medium, professionally called 'Zara', hung with endless necklaces and chains for her trances and producing ectoplasm galore in a rather dingy bed-sit somewhere in the Earls Court area. And Arnold Bennett, with that splendid coif of hair and gold-chained waistcoat, can have been nothing else but a floor-walker, not one of your tall and smart and lissom Selfridges brand but a portly, friendly, supervising presence among the soft furnishings in a leading store at, say, Blackburn.

I cheerfully make you a present of the game (somebody names the character to be transmogrified and allots marks for the results) and, anxious as I am for all readers to shine this Christmas, I am also providing some back-up comedic material for you in case the humorous cracker riddles that come your way are not fully up to scratch. I see you being the life and soul, I really do, and you just can't miss with these. Practise them over a time or two in private and then away you go. I give them in a roughly descending order of merit though to some these conundra may seem to be of a uniform level of excellence. Question: 'If a farmer sold 70 per cent of his sheep for £8,000, what would the remaining 30 per cent realise?' Answer: 'They would realise that a lot of their friends had gone.' Q: 'What did the Spanish farmer say to his hens? A: 'Olé.' Q: 'What has four legs and a trunk?' A: 'A married couple going on holiday.' And just one more for luck, and one of those that may need explanation. Q: 'When is a bus like water?' A: 'When it is due (dew).' There!

To return for a space to the Blackburn floor-walker, had you ever realised that his first name was, like the Mr Powell of whom we now seem to hear so little, Enoch? This is the kind of fact that a mind as richly stocked as my own coughs up from time to time and at unexpected moments. Little nuggets of information that have been lurking there for ages suddenly come popping out. A number of mine tend to be theatrical tit-bits and only the other day and while reassuring Mrs Mountjoy (Berenice in unbuttoned mood) about the improbability of Devon, let alone Appleton, ever suffering an earthquake ('If only we all lived in bungalows. . .!'), the figure of 2238 appeared as if by magic before my eyes. This, as many of you won't need reminding, is the number of performances achieved by *Chu-Chin-Chow* on its first production in 1916. Now what on earth can have jerked that out? The connection between underground rumblings and tuneful numbers such as 'Any Time's Kissing Time' is by no means immediately clear. And then only last Tuesday and while inspecting the ON OFFER section on proud display in our village shop (4p off tinned meat balls, a nutriment that never finds its way into the 'Myrtlebank' *cuisine* but which doubtless has its place in the Great Architect's scheme of things), I suddenly recalled and for no sensible reason a line from a production long ago of *Floradora* by the admirable Oundle Amateur Operatic Society in our spacious Victoria Hall. One of the minor characters uttered some thoughtful line or other about Life, to which her friend rather testily replied 'Don't be philosophical, Lottie.' Did you ever!

But however well stocked the mind, and mine is, as you see, exceptionally chock-a-block with intellectual treasures and the envy of many, one can always find a nook in it in which to harbour for future use this or that astonishing conversation-stopper, and a real stunner has recently come into my life concerning Elgar, and I do not need to add 'the composer' for all other Elgars seem to have been hiding their lights under bushels and only the one has, as far as I know, struggled gloriously to fame (said by some to have been at times *un peu difficile* but let that pass). I have garnered the fascinating Elgar fact from a far too long delayed reading of Osbert Sitwell's excellent *Noble Essences*, a series of personal recollections of such interesting and gifted people as Gosse, Firbank, Sickert, Rex Whistler and others. In his charming and adulatory piece on the noted, in two senses, harpsichordist, Violet Gordon Woodhouse, Sir Osbert relates that at a wartime gathering in the Woodhouses' flat in Mount Street, Mayfair, the eighty-seven-year-old Bernard Shaw, having walked all the way from Whitehall Court, announced, after a characteristic utterance of 'at my age you are either well or dead', that Elgar had liked to play, and over and over again, the gramophone records made by Cicely Courtneidge and Jack Hulbert, stating that in them he found the secret of the perfect use of rhythm. Did you, once again, ever! And just to think that if only I had moved in the right social circles, I could have been relishing this item for the best part of forty years.

Detective work is necessary here, for all must want to know which particular records so especially tickled Sir Edward's ear. The choice is not, as it happens, as wide as all that, for Elgar died in 1934 and the Hulberts, though in their different spheres already well enough known since about 1910, especially Miss Courtneidge (daughter of Robert Courtneidge, a sort of earlier C.B. Cochran), did not come into real prominence until, in 1923, the *Little Revue* at, where else, the Little Theatre, long since gone. By 1924 and another revue, the matchless *By The Way*, they were real stars, and so we have actually only ten years to cover. When did these dazzling talents first venture onto wax? Only the BBC record library could tell us, and I hardly like to thrust myself forward and make what might seem to them, with the strain of keeping Radio 3 so constantly provided with material, a trifling enquiry. So I must fall back on my own memory and resources and here I can be not unhelpful for in December 1926, the Hulberts appeared together at the Gaiety in a merry musical called *Lido Lady*.

Invited by my kind parents to name a theatrical treat for the Christmas hols, I looked no further than *Lido Lady*, where we found the Hulberts playing a brother and sister, Harry and Peggy Bassett, the former in love with Phyllis Dare, as was half the audience, and the latter happily affianced to Harold French, a delightful *jeune premier* soon to partner Gertrude Lawrence in *Oh, Kay!* and later to become (*French Without Tears*) a distinguished director. The piece was one of the earliest Rodgers and Hart hits and I still possess a recording, pressed, as we used then to say, in 1927 but as good as ever, give or take a few scratches, of a number rendered *con brio* by the Hulberts. It was called 'Try Again Tomorrow' and its lively lyric told the story of a rascally dance instructor who saw to it that his fee-paying pupils made little or no progress and remained, therefore, fee-paying. The number has a very rhythmic and pleasingly jiggy tune and the Hulberts, effortlessly enunciating and banging it out, gave it all they had, which was plenty. How astonished I would have been as I ceaselessly played this joyous record on my portable and jigged a little bit myself, to know that Sir Edward's, I suspect, stately mahogany 'Console' model was churning out the very same sounds, for who can doubt that this was one of the Hulbert records that he found so irresistible. Did he, when nobody was looking, jig a bit too? I do hope so.

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

John Arden

My Little Armalite

One for the Money: Politics and Popular Song by DAVE JARKER *Hutchinson* £9.95

I recently became acquainted with a couple of songs that have been, I am told, frequently performed by the women politicals inside Armagh Gaol on the 'no-wash' protest — as they are locked up in their cells 23 hours of the day, communal singing of necessity means individual singers pressing their mouths hard and painfully against the steel lining of the cell doors, and bellowing loudly enough to be heard by their comrades similarly pent up all the way down the wing. The first ballad is a lengthy narrative with a chorus after each verse. It begins something like this: 'On Ulster's hills when I was ten I roamed both far and wide . . .' and continues as the autobiography of a young man impelled to join the IRA after his experience of the brutality and bullying of the British Army in Northern Ireland through the years since 1969.

Its overall tone is that of a plea for reason to the general public, British and Irish — 'must this go on and on — why must Britain always choose the cruellest course when other solutions are available, etc.?' The hero is arrested and thrust through the 'Conveyor Belt' system of juridical expediency till he ends up in the H Blocks as a naked protester smearing his cell with his own filth (and by implication facing the final horror of the hunger strike). The familiar air is one long associated with Irish prison ballads — I have heard it used for a version of *Van Dieman's Land:* and the chorus goes:

> I'll wear no prison uniform, nor meekly serve my time
> That Britain might brand Ireland's fight eight hundred years of crime.

The conclusion of the ballad is one of comparative hope — at last an end to 800 years is in sight, and the determination of today's generation of prisoners will finally bring about the removal of coercive alien rule and the barbarities that have always accompanied it.

The second song is quite different in structure, tone, general purpose, and assumed audience. It is a repetitive stanza sung round the assembled company, with successive individual voices contributing their own places of residence to the first line until the solidarity of everyone's neighbourhood has been affirmed — thus:

> In Andystown (*or* Ballymurphy, *or* Derry City, *or wherever*. . .)
> That's where I long to be:
> Lying in the dark with my Provo companee.
> With my comrade on my left and my comrade on my right
> And sufficient ammunition for my little Armalite!

It is an obvious piece for raising the morale of republicans — its use in gaol needs no explanation. It would be, I guess, totally ineffective (indeed counter-productive: anyone dubious about Provo tactics might even be nauseated by its self-congratulation) as propaganda towards non-republican circles. Whereas the first song, despite — or maybe *because of* — its intransigent political simplicity, is surely a thought-provoker for any decent democratic person capable of thought rather than prejudice on the Irish question.

Now I have only had fragments of these songs passed on to me from memory: and I have no information about their provenance. They are clearly fairly recent, and their authors must at least be at one with the main aims of the Provisional IRA. Neither of them, I gather, are the creations of the prisoners themselves. A detailed programme of research into their origin and distribution would be more than a pedantic piece of thesis self-fulfilment, for would it not tell us a very great deal about the communities that maintain the nationalist resistance in N. Ireland, their social and cultural resources, their political aspirations, and the historical connection of all these with the broader Irish traditions of politics, poetry, and communal solidarity?

It might even produce a very considerable revision of accepted intellectual attitudes towards 'extremist cliques' and the allegedly more 'moderate' population-groups in which they occur. It probably isn't possible because too many multifarious suspicions would inevitably be aroused on all political sides: serious social and cultural inquiry can scarcely take place undisturbed in the midst of gunfire. But reading Mr Harker's fascinating and important book, I cannot help wishing that his energies could have been deployed upon the one area in these islands where popular traditional song is still a completely integral part of political struggle more or less untrammelled by 'bourgeois revivalism' or the dictates of mass-culture finance.

He doesn't handle Ireland, nor indeed does he pretend to handle all popular song, but he has effectively established how to deal with several varieties of it, and thereby gives other scholars and critics the clue how the same procedure might be undertaken in those areas he has been obliged to ignore. He has chapters on rock 'n' roll, Bob Dylan, 19th-century Northumbrian pit-ballads, a bit about Bing Crosby (*White Christmas,* etc), a lot about the record industry, and a scathing examination of the communist-influenced folksong revival of 30-odd years ago. As a lecturer in the School of Communication Studies at Manchester Polytechnic, he has been able to combine a literary breakdown of lyrics with sociological exploration of authors, publishers and singers, with the historical implications of particular sets of words vis-a-vis particular audiences.

He often seems to be rude about distinguished precursors in the same field such as Cecil Sharpe or A. L. Lloyd: but it is the rudeness of informed controversy, and it develops their work rather than debunks it. The one area he does not enter is musical analysis — there are no scores whatever in the book — but this is in itself so large a subject that he was probably wise to avoid an inadequate attempt — it should wait for another book, preferably one accompanied by illustrative tapes or records, if there were any practical way of achieving so expensive an arrangement. I am not too sure at times for whom, precisely, the book is intended. The tone of the text veers between academic dry-as-dust and matey new-new-left vernacular, as though the author is trying to disarm a glowering crowd of 'impress-me-if-you-dare-you-careerist-ratbag' IMG students at the same time as he is endeavouring to satisfy his Thatcher-beset superiors that his research-budget is something more than a layabout's con-trick. But these are minor points.

The book is intended to put popular song, all styles of it, into a new political perspective, and to stimulate further work. There can be no doubt it succeeds, and excitingly succeeds, primarily through that most fruitful of analytical devices, the exposure of contradictions. Here he is, on John Lennon:

> If *Working Class Hero* is a 'revolutionary song', in what ways is it subversive of the established order? Its very title expresses the dilemma of the popular songwriter and singer. In what way is Lennon, for example, a hero of that class? . . . Put crudely, Lennon's working-class credentials are dubious — grammar school, art college — however serious his intention to write *for* 'the people'. . . [The song's] form of consciousness is radical nonconformist *and* petty bourgeois: its attitudes remain unclarified and confused by anxiety . . .

'Unclarified and confused by anxiety' could describe our entire cultural landscape today. We badly need more books like this, if not finally to clarify, then at least to help us to understand the confusion.

John Spurling

Always Brave

The Story of Modern Art by NORBERT LYNTON *Phaidon* £13.95
Jacques-Louis David by ANITA BROOKNER *Chatto* £25
German Romantic Paintings by WILLIAM VAUGHAN *Yale* £19.95
The Complete Van Gogh by JAN HULSKER *Phaidon* £45

'Is art ornament or instruction?' asks Norbert Lynton in *The Story of Modern Art.* Diderot thought he knew the answer in 1763: 'What! hasn't the brush been wielded more than enough and for too long in the service of vice and debauchery?' Professor Lynton sees a parallel between the development during the last decade of Performance and Conceptual Art — the various means by which artists attempt to undermine, ridicule or openly attack our museum and commercial culture, with its emphasis on the material beauty and lasting value of art objects —and the second half of the 18th century, 'the very time when the modern art world, including art history and art criticism in the forms in which we know them, was being born'. E.H. Gombrich, to whose long-established *The Story of Art* Professor Lynton's book is a sequel, called his chapter dealing with that period 'The Break in Tradition' and noticed a new self-consciousness about style coupled with a search for fresh subject-matter. The trouble with Professor Lynton's parallel is not that it doesn't fit but that, as his book reiterates, Modern Art has been one long series

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of breaks in tradition which have turned out retrospectively not to have been real breaks at all.

On the other hand it cannot be purely by chance that now at long last the dust-sheets are coming off Jacques-Louis David. His bicentenary retrospective in 1948 'misfired', Anita Brookner tells us, but in any case whoever reads her splendid new justification of him — which she modestly if ominously suggests is intended only as a preparation for the 'more lengthy researches' of numerous other scholars in France and America — will want to be able to see a new David retrospective as soon as possible.

Most people probably associate David with the cruelties of the French Revolution: he was Robespierre's intimate associate, voted for the King's execution and, calling out insults, witnessed Danton's head roll. Most people also probably have a second image of him as a Neo-Classicist, the cool studied creator of stoic scenes from Greek and Roman history legend. Beside these apparent contradictions must be set his role as Napoleon's 'first painter' and the portraits — glowingly alive, relaxed, contemporary — which he painted throughout his career and which look forward to those of his pupil Ingres.

As for the two kinds of painting, Dr Brookner distinguishes between what she calls 'the demands of the "ought"' — the public-spirited, moral (*'peindre comme on parlait a Spart'*) inheritance from Rousseau and Diderot which went into such grave and instructive works as *The Oath of the Horatii* and *The Death of Socrates* — and David's 'alternative voice', the delicate, personal sensitivity to his sitters derived from Boucher, Fragonard and Greuze.

Of course the division is nothing like so extreme as it would be now. The point about Performance and Conceptual art is that there is little or even literally nothing to give sensual pleasure to the spectator, whereas the moral beauty of Socrates' death is precisely conveyed by the material beauty of the painting. Just so, the frankness of the portraits, the austere concentration on the sitter, regardless of his or her temporary social status (bourgeois, aristocrat or *ci-devant* aristocrat about to be topped), goes well beyond mere 'ornament'.

As for David's own character and career, which superficially suggest those of the vicar of Bray, Dr Brookner reconciles their apparent contradictions too, without smoothing out the complexities. David passed from rococo student to Neo-Classicist master to organiser of republican ceremonies to Imperial propagandist without compromising his art. His compromises were made after he went into exile under the restored Bourbons and were attempts to retrieve the Neo-Classicist style when its spirit had left both him and the age. In other words, through all his vicissitudes of style and function he remained powerfully himself, changing with the times because he and the times were at one in wanting change. Indeed he was more a leader than a camp-follower. When his first mature masterpiece, *The Oath of the Horatii,* was first shown to the public in 1785 it not only made him famous but created a fashion: 'Furniture, dress, decoration, textiles, all underwent a change in taste and style'. As a man he was vain, lacking in compassion, not in general very likeable, but always, to use Dr Brookner's word, 'brave'. His actions during the Terror were not those of a toady but of a man *'en délire'*: all this life he 'lived in a state of permanent excitement'. And this is of course the key to the tension in his outwardly cold and formal history paintings: the action, as in French classical tragedy, has happened or will happen somewhere else, but the emotion, ornamentally expressed and deeply instructive, is centre stage.

Dr Brookner often remarks on David's difficulties with perspective. Her own difficulty is with plotting. She is good on detail and analysis, but rather clumsy at paying out the thread of her narrative and apt to repeat herself. Also the book suffers from its old-fashioned arrangement, with all the black-and-white plates gathered at the end. But I shall be surprised if any of those scholars labouring towards us from both sides of the Atlantic does a better job for David than this.

Overtaking David even at the height of his enthusiasm and success was of course the big wave behind the small one of Neo-Classicism, *viz.* Romanticism. The confused ideologies of our time are certainly parallelled by the artistic movements of the late 18th century. Here is Classicism marching with the French Revolution and re-emerging as Napoleonic imperialism, while Romanticism springs up in the defeated states of Germany out of a mixture of nationalism and radicalism, takes the form of anti-rationalist nostalgia for the faith and certainty of the Gothic Middle Ages and declines by the mid-19th century into bourgeois conformism, children's fairy-tales and right-wing propaganda. Of course it continues its Protean course from there, right up to our own time, but William Vaughan's book concerns itself only with Germany and breaks off with Fontane's ill-judged statement: 'Romanticism is finished on this earth; the age of the railway has dawned'.

Mr Vaughan organised the Caspar David Friedrich exhibition at the Tate in 1972 and his best chapters as well as his best illustrations are naturally devoted to Friedrich, a painter quite as powerful for his dark Gothic faith as David for his clear classical/republican one, though Friedrich cut off no heads in pursuit of his. Nevertheless, if there are occasional *longueurs* in Mr Vaughan's attempt to acquaint one with too many unfamiliar artists at one blow there are equally many fresh pleasures to be had from that very unfamiliarity. The august Goethe, for example, appears here as a decidedly absurd figure, constantly handing down advice with lofty self-importance, just as constantly missing the point.

There is also a fascinating chapter here on those early pre-Raphaelites and proto-Flower People, the Nazarenes, and especially their two curiously contrasted but touchingly devoted leaders, Pforr and Overbeck. The book is exceptionally well designed, with the plates placed exactly where they're needed and a good proportion of them in colour.

The disadvantages of *The Complete Van Gogh* are that it weighs as much as a substantial new-born baby, that its illustrations are mostly too small and dark and very confusing as to relative proportions and that its text trudges along sometimes several pages behind the relevant pictures.

Its main overwhelming advantage is that it takes you step by step through all Van Gogh's sketches, drawings and paintings in chronological order, with frequent quotations from his letters, so that you see and understand almost as if you lived it the very process of a tradition in the breaking. If ever there was an artist intent on instruction, both of himself and the world, it was the Netherlandish Vincent whittling away at his grey peasants and their grim environment; it ever there was ornamental art it was those ecstatically coloured Provencal masterpieces. They have become among the most commonplace decorations of our time and we need a book like this, whatever its disadvantages, to re-engage the ornament with its immense shadow of instruction.

It is really too soon to write *The Story of Modern Art,* unless you are prepared to do history's work of sorting out for it. Professor Lynton has opinions — he is quite sharp, for instance with Post-Painterly Abstraction —but there is too much of the judicious museum official about his approach. He leaves most of his questions open. Art, as Diderot understood, may be ornament or instruction or both at once, but it's above all something you believe in to the point of excluding and breaking away from alternatives.

Rhea Kohan

HAND-ME-DOWNS

Set in Southern California, this is an exuberant, lusty and ultimately very moving story about three generations of women.

"There is much pleasure in Miss Rhea Kohan's *Hand-Me-Downs* . . . this novel has originality, wit, humour and great compassion . . . brilliant." *Peter Tinniswood,* **The Times**

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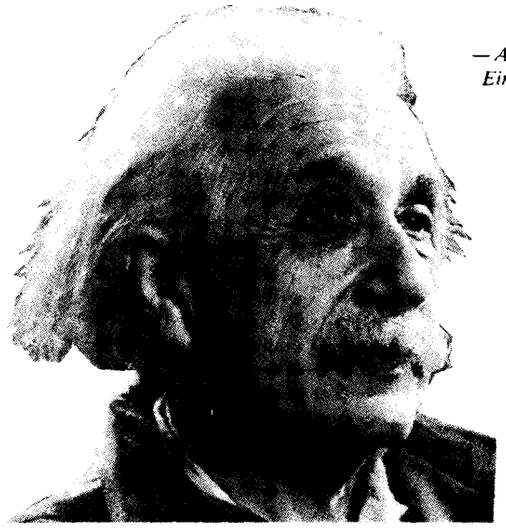
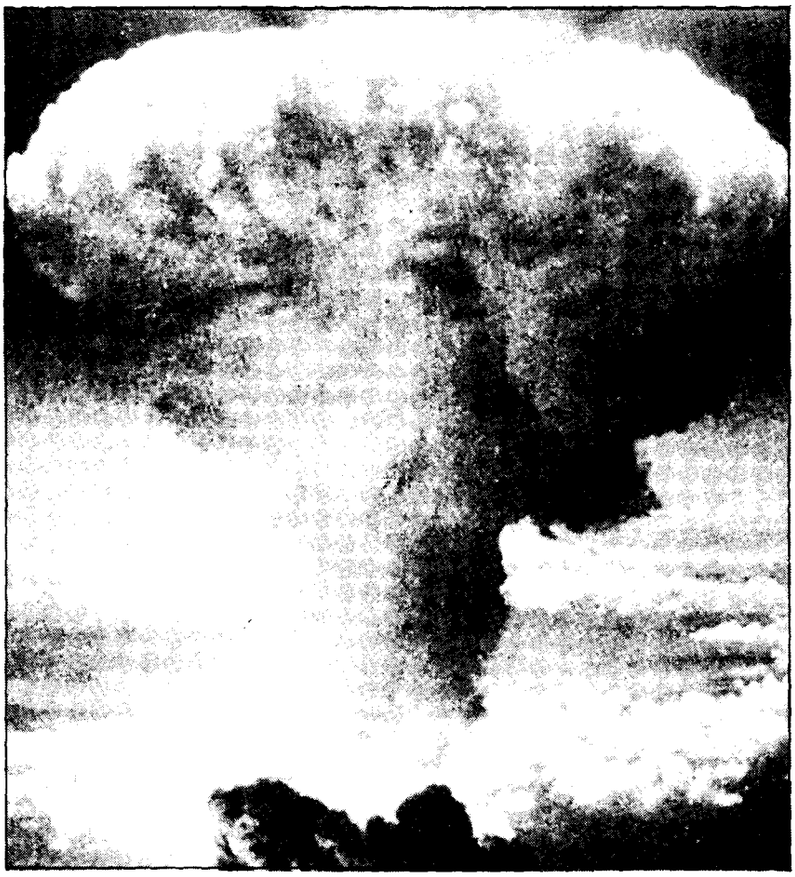
'Evil is sophisticated but not malicious'

— *Albert Einstein*





Opinion-poll evidence suggests that a large and growing number of people — in Western Europe especially — consider nuclear warfare to be likely, even inevitable. Faith in deterrence is probably lower than it has ever been since the system came into being, and this scepticism is supported by much distinguished scientific opinion. The international Pugwash group of scientists has this year re-emphasized its warnings, while adding 'an important rider: hope must not be extinguished'. Here BRUCE PAGE, editor of the *New Statesman*, re-examines the history of nuclear weapons, and suggests that the world may still respond to intellectual effort.

MY AIM HERE is to try to answer a critically important question of contemporary history, and one which underlies the newly-urgent issues of nuclear war and nuclear peace. Why did the German physicists of the 1940s fail to see how a nuclear bomb could be made — despite the fact that they appeared to be the best-qualified to do so, and despite the fact that they had all the necessary information available? Was or was not this failure connected to the supremely evil nature of the regime which controlled their country?

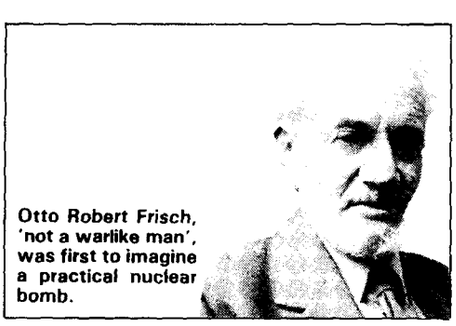
In order to tackle these questions it is necessary, I contend, to make some unfamiliar connections between science, literature and historical method — even with theology, though an agnostic like myself must tremble to do so. The answers, I think, suggest a view of human nature which — if by no means starry-eyed — is at least less bleakly self-defeating than some of the versions on offer at the moment: one which offers the prospect that we may find a survival-path through the crises which seem likely to afflict the 1980s.

Let us begin with some biographical anecdotes, coupled with one or two speculations about intellectual creativity.

The first person to see, with decisive precision, how a bomb might be made was not a physicist of the first rank. Certainly Otto Robert Frisch (who retired as Jacksonian Professor at Cambridge) was well beyond mere competence. But I think his own evaluation was devoid of mock-modesty: someone with a large talent for experiment and for explication, but unable for the most part to deploy great scientific initiative.

Now to a story, which emerged from a long interview I had with him towards the end of his life. I was aware that Frisch was a fine pianist: indeed, a grand piano crowded the little room into which his wife ushered me, with the quiet aside that his part in the making of the bomb was not something her husband took pleasure in recalling. He walked me around the chilly streets of Cambridge, and I asked him among other things, if he had 'perfect pitch'. Not really, he said: anyway, not for long.

It wasn't always realised, he said, that perfect pitch — the ability to identify any musical note without reference — could come and go with some people, according to their health, their training, or their emotional condition. His mother, a professional musician, had possessed *perfect* perfect pitch: she had tested Robert as a child, and found to her distress that his was not so reliable. (Over the years, one had the fleeting impression of a Viennese household in which such a discovery had the impact of dyslexia in contemporary Wimbledon.) Because of his disability, Robert became less certain of music as a career, and more attracted to the work of his mother's sister, Lise Meitner — a physicist, of great intuitive power, whose name recurs in the major drama.



Otto Robert Frisch, 'not a warlike man', was first to imagine a practical nuclear bomb.

When Frisch was growing up, there was in Vienna a choir which sang extremely complex music without accompaniment: perfect pitch was considered an operational necessity for its members. And, he told me — stumping along with a velocity well beyond anything plausible in a 70-year-old — he conceived himself to be in love with a girl who sang in this very choir.

Her devotion to music was such that she said she could find no time to see him unless he would join the choir. Useless, lamented the young Robert — I don't have the pitch. All the same, she said, come to some rehearsals.

After a few sessions, the choirmaster said: Robert, you should take the perfect pitch test, and join us. Useless, said Robert. You must, said the girl. So he tried, and he passed, and joined the choir. 'For a few months, 50 years ago, I had perfect pitch. You should never underestimate the power of sex'.

In the summer of 1940, I shall suggest, Frisch possessed — or became possessed by — the equivalent in physics of perfect pitch, and with large consequences for our world.

BEFORE RETURNING to the nuclear narrative, let me identify a few more clues, however improbable. One can say, by ironic

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exaggeration, that no original economist was an economist: namely that Smith was a moral philosopher, Ricardo a stockbroker, Marx a journalist, Keynes (by aspiration) a philosopher of probability, Kalecki an engineer, Tinbergen a physicist, etc. The real point is not to decry economic training as such, but rather to emphasise that something otherwise is needed to make those obvious — but fiendishly difficult — discoveries about economic organisation which change, eventually, the society around us.

Marshall had a finer mind than Keynes, and perhaps trained it better: yet he was a lifelong slave to 'Say's Law', which proposes the threadbare idea that supply automatically creates its own demand. You had only to understand Malthus or Marx to see that this is not true beyond the trivial level. But Marshall and many other wise fellows quite failed to see through it in the way Keynes and Kalecki managed to do.

But you do not have to read far into either of those writers to see that they thought economic science depended quite as much upon moral integrity as upon intellectual agility. Of course, that does not mean that a good economist is always a respectable, or even an amiable fellow: only that a creative economist is usually one who grasps the moral dimension of the work. The point is put well by Professor Joan Robinson, and no less truly for being done by way of a wry aside:

> The more I read Marshall, the more I admire his intellect, and the less I admire his character.[1]

Character's relationship with intellect is a proper subject for literature, and a compact text may be found in *The Butterfly That Stamped,* subtlest and most evocative of Kipling's *Just So Stories.* In this context, no harm — and much good — will be done by setting aside the grotesque apartheid rules which say that children's tales are not to be taken seriously. (Recall Newton's image of himself as a child playing with seashore pebbles.)

King Suleiman-bin-Daoud, who knew 'what the rocks said deep under the earth', had a ring which, turned once, brought afrits and djinns to his bidding, and which turned twice brought him other powers from the sky.

> . . . and when he turned it three times the very great Angel Azrael of the Sword came, dressed as a water-carrier and told him news of the three worlds, Above, Below and Here . . .

Clearly, this conferred large influence. But to the distress of his one true wife Balkis, Suleiman would not use it even so far as to prevent his 999 political wives from pestering him (over heirs and territory) into ill-health. For Suleiman recalled an occasion when he employed his powers to create enough food — as he thought — to feed all the animals in the world.

At that moment an animal called Small Porgies, least of 30,000 brothers, appeared from the sea-bed and, consuming everything in one gulp, said his brothers had asked him when dinner would be served. Suleiman admitted that in reality he had been using his powers for self-aggrandisement — not generosity — and the false motivation had cancelled them out.

Subsequently, Balkis does cause Suleiman to make the whole of his palace, with its 999 domestic politicians, vanish in a clap of

False motivation, in Kipling's view, will cancel creativity.

thunder — only to be restored shortly after, with suitably-chastened inhabitants. But this can only be done by involving him in a joke with the least formidable of insects: laughter being one of the circumstances which prevent the mind from being clouded by arrogance.

> 'O my Lord and Treasure of my Soul, rejoice, for we have taught the Queens of Egypt and Mesopotamia and Abyssinia . . . with a great and memorable teaching'. And Suleiman-bin-Daoud said . . . 'O my Lady and Jewel of my Felicity, when did this happen? For I have been jesting with a butterfly ever since I came into the garden . . .'

TODAY WE FORGET easily how obvious, in the Thirties, was the general idea behind The Bomb. Eric Ambler's first novel, *The Dark Frontier,* written in 1934, concerned the political consequences of nuclear weaponry. How did he think of it? I asked him once. 'It was fairly obvious', he said, 'if you had been educated as an engineer, which I was.'

But *what* was obvious? Einstein had proved the complete equivalence of matter and energy, where previously human imagination had not gone beyond the proposal that energy locked-up in the chemical structure of matter might be released (for instance in combusion).

It was not hard to see that energy released by the shattering of nuclear bonds would be enormously greater, even if the precise calculation was unimaginable to most people. (Energy released would be proportional to mass lost, multiplied by the *square of the speed of light*.) Fairly obviously, this offered an explanation for the energies of the sun, inexplicable in chemical terms, but credible in terms of hydrogen nuclei fusing to form smaller numbers of heavier helium nuclei. Such a 'thermonuclear' reaction would exclude some of the original mass, and extrude vast quantities of energy.

It was also credible that some nuclei might be less stable than others: particularly the light, simple ones and the heavy, complex ones like uranium. But to imagine real processes, which under human direction might initiate such nuclear transformation, was something altogether more staggering.

> What the anvil? What dread grasp
> Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

During the pre-war years, there was one physicist above all to whom others turned when ultimate and baffling questions were to be confronted: Niels Bohr of Copenhagen. This was true not only in physics, for Bohr was one of the most practical leaders in the business of rescuing Jewish and other dissident scientists from the Nazi tyranny: among them was Robert Frisch. Here, it may be economical to describe him through the words of two of his students: Frisch, who made the bomb for the West, and Carl von Weizsacker, who might have made the bomb for Hitler, but failed to do so.

Frisch revered Bohr wholly. 'To understand him, you needed to see him cutting down a tree. When I knew him, he was no longer the athlete he had been in his youth. But still he projected a great sense of physical, as well as mental poise and energy. The energy and the intuitive power seemed almost limitless'.

Rudyard Kipling, aboard ship, story-telling with children. Physical attitude, he considered, would govern imagination: a proposition made plain in *True Thomas,* the ballad-pastiche which explains why Kipling would never consider being Poet Laureate. The King cannot hire True Thomas, nor even hear a song without dismounting from his horse. 'Whenas I harp to the children small/They clasp me close on either hand./And who are you, True Thomas said,/That you should ride, while they must stand?'

1 *Collected Economic Papers,* Vol. 4

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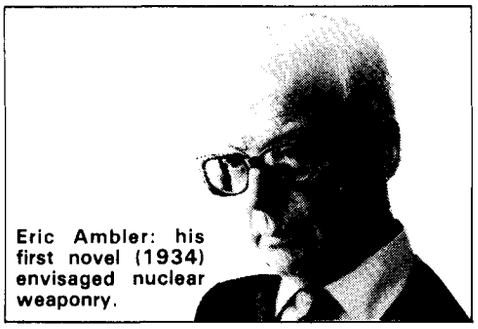


Eric Ambler: his first novel (1934) envisaged nuclear weaponry.

Weizsacker, in a recent interview for the Open University[2] said that on meeting Bohr

> I suddenly saw a man who understood that you cannot utter a single word without having the difficulty that you don't know what you say . . . my impression was he suffers immensely from thinking and from speaking and at the same time he knows it is necessary to speak and this impression of creative suffering was quite extraordinary.

Von Weizsacker then gave an even more striking description of Bohr's energy and intellectual method: an anecdote beginning with an appointment for the assessment of a paper the German had written.

> . . . he gave the impression of being very tired and that was natural because at that time he was doing all the many steps which he did for saving the Jewish physicists from Germany and besides he was a government adviser, he had many duties. And he was tired. And he started talking . . . 'Oh, that's a very interesting paper' . . . and I felt he hadn't read it. And then he said . . . just now look, page 17, there is one thing I don't understand . . . and so it went on and it turned out that he had completely read the paper and after an hour he was no longer tired and I started to be a little bit tired and after two hours I was really tired and he was in full swing, and during the third hour he had criticised all I had said . . . in a very, very kind manner but full of enthusiasm . . . he said: 'Now I have understood the point . . . everything is just exactly the opposite of what you have said'. Now, if you go through that experience several times you are a changed person.

The most celebrated product of Bohr's marvellous intuition was the 'planetary model' of the atom, perhaps the best-known symbol of our age, and still the only image of sub-molecular nature that most ordinary people possess. When Bohr produced it, while studying with Rutherford in 1913, it was immediately seen as one of the greatest clarifying ideas in scientific history: though the sense of order which it produced, amid baffling phenomena, made the basis for an almost incredible effloresence of new discoveries which rapidly made the model itself scientifically obsolete.

So people looked to Bohr from all over the world when they found their minds spinning with new ideas. Now, according to Frisch, Bohr had some particular ideas about the working of the mind. First, he thought it ought to boggle. If you could think about nuclear physics without your mind boggling, he believed, then you were on the wrong lines altogether. Also, he believed in the need to confront nature with humility: Frisch recalled meeting him leaving a gathering of philosophers, and wagging his head remorsefully. 'They're debating the meaning of humility', he said. 'But none of them have the slightest idea what it feels like'.

CENTRALLY, he believed in 'complementarity', which he would express sometimes by saying: 'Small truths *deny* each other when they are opposed, but big truths *contain* each other.' Professionally, he used this conception against those who argued that light must be *either* a wave motion, *or* a stream of particles. It was either, said Bohr, according to how you set up your experiment. Or he would say: 'What matters is not so much how the world is, but how we as physicists choose to think about it.' With Bohr, wrote Frisch much later, 'we give up the naive concept of reality'.

So, to the story of the bomb, and Frisch's part in using Bohr's thought to make it. Robert's aunt Lise Meitner, protected somewhat by her Austrian citizenship, went on working in Berlin with her close colleague Otto Hahn, until 1938. Their work on the nature of heavy nuclei was fruitful, because Hahn's precision as a physical chemist blended readily with Meitner's theoretical and intuitive strength. But in 1938, after the Anschluss, Meitner had to leave, sadly, for Stockholm.

In Christmas of that year her nephew travelled from Copenhagen to see how he could help her — for the great scientist was also an elderly lady uprooted cruelly from a world that once had seemed not insecure. When Robert arrived, she had just received a letter from Hahn, who said that in his latest experiments the bombardment of uranium with streams of neutrons had produced — barium, an element whose nucleus was just half as massive.

It was almost as though the uranium nucleus had split in two, said Hahn. But obviously, physics forbade such things, and it was more likely that he and his team had made some error in their chemistry. Rubbish, said Lise Meitner, guessing what the rocks said deep in the earth. Hahn's too good a chemist. Why shouldn't the nucleus split?

Bohr and Frisch: two views of uranium's potential

Now here was a combination of intellect, despite the division of Europe's cities, for Hahn had provided the evidence, Meitner the intellectual daring, and Frisch (a childhood mathematical prodigy) the calculating power. Years later, he recalled how they walked up and down in the snow, with the ideas and calculations going back and forth between them.

What would Bohr say, who understood everything? Bohr smacked his hand to his forehead when he heard this crazy, mad thing. 'Of course it's right', he said. 'What idiots we've been.' Rapidly, whole tracts of information fell into place: those strange energies which Marie Curie had discovered, and Einstein had explained in general, could now be accounted for systematically and in the particular.[3]

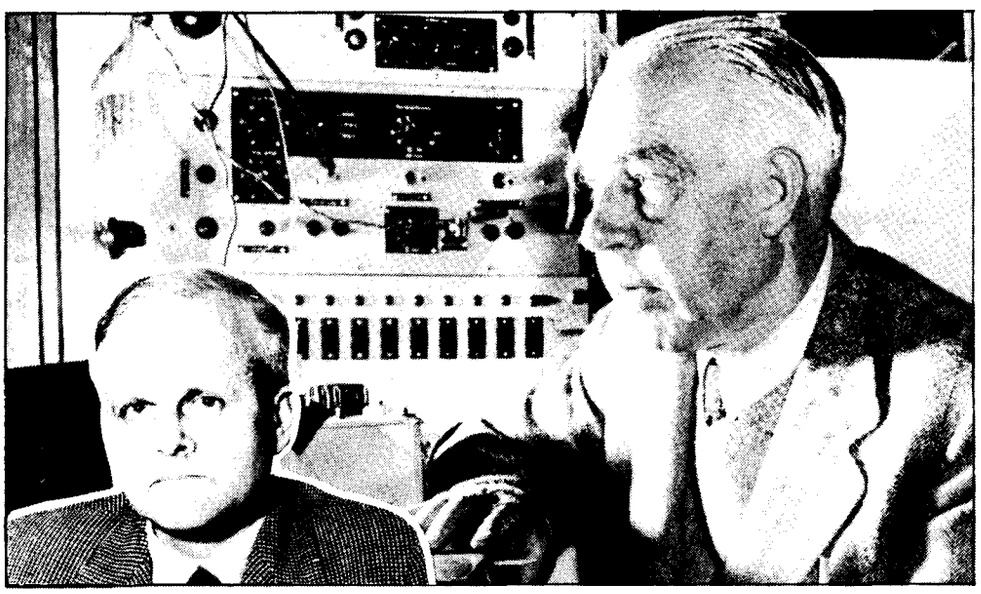
Also, a wave of apprehension travelled through the international village of nuclear physics. Suddenly, the ideas played with by the thriller-writers became something like a practical matter. Hahn had shattered the uranium nucleus by firing neutrons at it from an outside source. But the fission of each nucleus must produce another burst of neutrons. Could things be so arranged that the fission of one nucleus would lead to the fission of others: so as to make the general level or neutron-bombardment inside a mass or uranium intolerable? Could there be an explosive chain-reaction? (If so, it would produce heat and pressure comparable to the interior of the sun: it might, indeed, bring a thermonuclear reaction within human grasp.)

Everything depended upon the energy of the escaping neutrons, and the probabilities of their hitting other nuclei while travelling fast: upon the 'collision cross-section' which could be assigned to the uranium nucleus, which doesn't mean a simple diameter such as one might get by sawing a pencil in half, but is rather an attempt to measure the possibility that moving bodies will coincide in space and time.

2. Interview by Peter Walton for Open University programme *Scientists Remember Germany 1918-45*, for transmission at 11.50 a.m. on 4 July 1981 in the course 'Science & Belief: from Darwin to Einstein'.

3. In a passage through intellectual history, a discursus on sex-roles may be permitted. Women, it has been said, played no decisive role in the development of art, music, philosophy and poetry. These disciplines were the product of ages which denied even notional equality to women. Ours is the first to have gone even so far, and it is notable that the history of its distinctive intellectual activity — physics — cannot be written if women are excluded from the story. It may be worth noting that Ida Noddack (née Tacke) first suggested fission in 1934.

Niels Bohr, who penetrated uranium's nature. 'What matters is how we choose to think about the world'. Inset: his brilliant student Carl von Weizsacker, who risked the possibility of a Nazi bomb.



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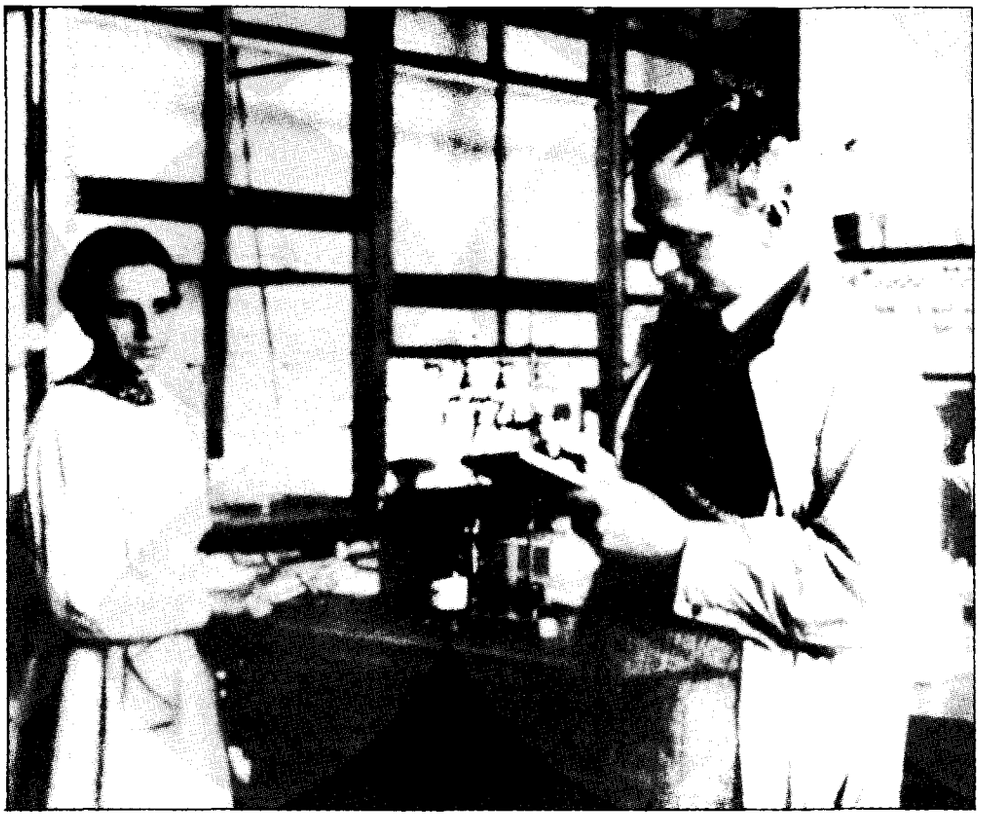

Otto Hahn, chemist, and Lise Meitner, physicist. Though Hahn, being non-Jewish, could stay in Germany, Meitner was expelled: their intellectual partnership still continued.

Such calculations must be daunting ones. Yet Germany under Hitler — despite the Jewish exodus — remained rich in physicists qualified to attack the problem. In particular, there was Werner Heisenberg, one of the intellectual giants of the new physics that Einstein had created, and there was Heisenberg's disciple, the young von Weizsacker, just back from studying with Bohr, and already one of the world's principal experts on nuclear cross-sections.

Werner Heisenberg, Germany's greatest physicist, feared Nazism, but remained politically ambiguous.

THE WORLD WAS POISED between the tyrannies of Hitler and of Stalin, and most people correctly anticipated that a major war could not be far away. The physicists had this to live with, and also terrible knowledge that tyranny might be able to arm itself with weapons of savagery never seen before.

Yet by the end of 1939, though the war had begun, these nuclear nightmares had almost entirely dissolved. Partly, this was because of the practical difficulties which occurred, but principally it was because of theoretical considerations which Niels Bohr advanced in a letter to the *American Physical Review*. How many who read it recalled his dictum that 'large truths contain each other'?

His argument began in familiar terms. An atom, such as that of uranium, is only an arrangement of sub-atomic particles, and quite often two slightly different arrangements ('isotopes') will present to the world a similar chemical character. Uranium is an example; it occurs naturally as uranium 238 with traces of uranium 235. The isotope which contains three fewer subatomic particles, though chemically identical, would behave very differently — Bohr suggested — under neutron attack.

It had been proposed almost from the start that it would be atoms at the two extremes of the curve of binding energy — the light, simple ones, and the heavy complex ones — which would be least coherent. But Bohr and others had proposed more recently that the curve was not likely to be smooth. Among the numerically-possible combinations of particles, there would be 'magic numbers', with stability greater than their nuclear weight would otherwise suggest: by the same token, there would be others near them with lesser stability. Even numbers of nucleons, as in U-238, would be likely to have more stability than odd numbers like U-235.

Bohr proposed, on the basis of magic-number theory, that U-238, the major component of the element, was actually rather stable. It was only the presence of traces of U-235 which gave the *appearance* of a high 'collision cross-section'.

There seemed no obvious way of changing this basic characteristic of uranium, nor of providing a neutron bombardment of such efficiency as to destabilise U-238. In cities where the matter was understood, Bohr's letter in the *Physical Review* was greeted with considerable relief: Robert Frisch remembered particularly the ease which it brought to his mind. The possibility of a bomb which might well bring about the end of the civilised world was not something which any sane person wanted to contemplate: it only came to be examined because one of the world's great nations fell into the hands of men whose insanity was obvious.

HOW DID FRISCH come to reverse the wisdom of Bohr? Some clues to the way I would like to approach this puzzle have been laid down, but it will be useful to mention one other piece of scientific creativity which occurred at the same time. The atom bomb played no part in the defeat of Nazism, but almost at the moment when Frisch grasped its principles, the physics department in which he was working gave birth to a device which 'won' the war if any such thing can said to have done so.

When Frisch arrived at Birmingham University just before the Nazis overran Copenhagen, he could not (being an 'enemy alien') take part in the physics department's major war work, which was on radar.

Radar was a technology examined by most major nations in the Thirties, but in order to produce useful echoes great power had to be used, which could only be done on wavelengths of several metres. Accuracy relates precisely to wave-length, and long-wave radar would clearly be of little help in directing gunfire, catching night-bombers or locating such tiny objects as the conning-towers of submarines. The Government Chief Scientist had predicted, correctly, that 'the country which first develops high power on high frequency will win the coming war'. But nobody could produce a radio-valve capable of meeting the demand.

Then in 1940 two young scientists named Randall and Boot, attached to the Birmingham radar team, produced a valve called the 'resonant-cavity magnetron', which immediately produced high power on a wavelength of 9.6 *centimetres*. It won, or decisively affected, all of the battles that were fought in darkness over the years to 1945. I don't wish to tell its story in detail here, but merely note an important fact about the discovery: that Randall and Boot made the discovery without quite knowing how the instrument worked. Proper theoretical explanation of the resonant-cavity magnetron came only after it had won its victories: and

From Blake's illustrations in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*.

without intending any disrespect to two men who did much to save our world, it would be fair to say that neither of them achieved afterwards any quite comparable scientific advance. Perfect pitch, it seems, did not return. But then, as an American visitor observed, there were moments in Britain in 1940 when 'it was like living in Troy'.

FRISCH DID SOMETHING which now looks simple. He used Bohr's own principle of complementarity. Suppose U-238 had almost no fissile capacity, then it must be concentrated in U-235. So suppose you had *only* U-235, having found some way to refine it from the natural mixture. How much would be needed to make a bomb? Just a few pounds, of course.

Together with Rudolf Peierls, a young Berliner who had also sought refuge at Bir-

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mingham, he now wrote the *Frisch-Peierls Memorandum*, which in three pages of typescript showed that nuclear warfare was not an impractical dream, but a highly practical reality.

The paper is written in English which swiftly makes one forget that this was the native language of neither author: its reasoning is simple and plain, and it can be followed in outline by anybody with a secondary-school grasp of science. At one level, and perhaps the most important, it is simply a brilliant piece of explication and popularisation, in a subject which until then had been impenetrable to all but a few hundred scientists. 'Truth', said Blake, 'cannot be told in such a way as to be understood, and not be believed'.[4]

And it produced a self-sustaining reaction. Boiling events down ruthlessly, one can say that it wholly reversed the earlier consensus against nuclear warfare's possibility. Those who — in military secrecy — decided British policy were forced to the conclusion that a bomb might well be made, and they began an energetic programme towards that end.

Space here compels much compression of history. Yet I think it may be shown that had Frisch and Peierls not written when they did, and with such passion and precision, then the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombs would not have been ready before the surrender of Japan. The sequence is admittedly complex, but the central point is that the bomb was *only just* ready.

Causally, the *Memorandum* led to the report of the MAUD committee, which began the British pursuit of military nuclear energy, and which further prepared the way for the rapid transition of the whole British team — including major talents like James Chadwick, as well as Frisch and Peierls themselves — to the Manhattan Project. The material resources which produced the 1945 bombs were almost entirely American, but the critical difference which the British team made is that they had already asked — and answered — the right theoretical questions.

Thus, the Manhattan Project could aim almost directly for its target, and without that advantage several critical months would very probably have been lost.

4. *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell.*

Of course, a view of history which says that Hiroshima and Nagasaki only just happened — and by implication, might not have happened — is bound to be unpopular. Our contemporary mind is educated, perhaps more subtly than it knows, to believe in the inevitability of all matters of great consequence. We readily accept that trivial matters in our everyday lives may go by luck, chance and narrow margins. But we find it offensive to our pride to think that the same might be true of such cataclysms as the nuclear assault upon Japan.

The history of narrow margins in human affairs

LET ME recommend that physics calls a 'thought experiment'; read the records of the decision to drop the bomb against Thucydides' account of the Mytilenean debate, and its outcome, in *The Peloponnesian War*.

In a perilous moment for Athens, the aristocracy of Mytilene betrayed their city's treaty and joined the Spartans. After some ugly fighting, Paches of Athens contrived an alliance with the Mytilenean democracy, and recaptured the city. In the heat of victory, the Athenian assembly voted to wipe out the whole population of the guilty city, and a trireme was dispatched to carry this message across the Aegean.

Meanwhile, in a second debate, the Assembly changed its mind, at the motion of Diodotus, and voted to execute only those Mytilinean aristocrats who had been responsible for the city's treachery. That was not, in fact, surprising: the real question was did sufficient time now exist to overtake the message already sent?

> The first trireme had a start of about 24 hours. The ambassadors from Mytilene provided wine and barley for the crew and promised great rewards if they arrived in time . . . the men . . . kept on rowing while they took their food. Luckily, they had no wind against them, *and as the first ship was not hurrying on its distasteful mission* . . . what happened was that the first ship arrived so little ahead of them that Paches had just had time to read the decree and prepare to put it into force when the second ship put into the harbour . . . So narrow had been the escape of Mytilene.

And of all of us. Were we to remember the Athenians as authors of genocide, we would not really remember them at all, whereas the fact is (even though Sparta, finally, won the war) that their memory supports our lives today in ways so pervasive that we must make a conscious effort to perceive them.

By so narrow a margin, also, was Hiroshima condemned. And by so narrow a margin was it decided that the Western allies — centrally, the Americans, but responsibility lies here also — would be remembered as the authors of nuclear massacre. We should not become so involved with our account of the imperialist class-forces acting through Harry Truman (or through Cleon, the spokesman of Athenian vengeance), or of the humane, democratic virtues expressed in Diodotus' speech (or the Franck Report, which attempted to prevent Hiroshima) as to forget that the wind happened to drop in that tideless sea.

IF FRISCH AND PEIERLS saw so clearly, what obscured the vision of Heisenberg and von Weizsacker, who would have been rated conventionally as a team of greater eminence?

Some years ago, in *Brighter than a Thousand Suns*, Robert Jungk suggested that the German physicists chose deliberately not to make the bomb, though it lay within their power. He implied, indeed, that they had perhaps shown a moral courage lacking in Western physicists — who did make the bomb, and then failed to prevent its use against a defeated nation.

But to suggest that Werner Heisenberg, a figure of considerable political ambiguity, possessed more moral courage than — say — Robert Oppenheimer was, and is, ridiculous. Nor is it true, in narrative terms, that distinguished Germans failed to apply considerable energy to the problems of nuclear explosive.

I suggest that Jungk is subtly, but centrally mistaken. It was precisely their moral ambiguity, and in some cases their moral depravity, which prevented the Germans from achieving those intuitive feats which were necessary to the nuclear programme (and necessary in the physics of centimetric radar). The proposal is that human creative ability — the daring which sees what has not yet been seen — is directly related to emotional and moral states. To go further: creativity is likely to be highest in conditions of moral security (we are right) combined with conditions of emotional insecurity (we may be in danger: we may lose life or love). In Hitler's Germany, of course, the second condition was readily fulfilled. But the first, except for the simplest intellects, was generally impossible.

Upon the Western side, both conditions were readily met — and not only for Jews. (Erwin Schrödinger, a central author of wave mechanics, nearly lost his life when he stepped in to prevent some stormtroopers' anti-semitic horseplay.)

I am repeating here, for specific reasons, something which has often been said generally: the striking point about the Thousand-Year Reich was not its strength, but its instability. And I am arguing that its weakness — particularly its inability to unlock the apparently decisive powers of 'Zeus's thun-

The intuitive leap which made atomic bombs possible had no effect on the war against Hitler. But an imaginative feat undertaken at the same time, in the same university (Birmingham) probably 'won' that war if any one device did so. J.T. Randall and H.A.H. Boot devised the 'resonant cavity magnetron' (centre) and solved, almost at a stroke, the problem of making radar highly accurate.

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derbolt' — was directly related to its wickedness.

And I argue that the error of our times, made in the terrible crucible of the Thirties, made by some of the finest men and women we shall know, was to forget that *the creativity of evil must always be denied*. I will return to this later, remarking only that, to the most formidable intellects of medieval times this rule, however difficult to operate, seemed wholly critical in the defence of human sanity.

MUCH OF THE literature of this subject has been concerned with showing that the people who made the bomb were not moral superhumans: some of it was written by physicists themselves in conscious reaction against Jungk's over-simplified pieties. To suggest that anyone capable of doing quantum mechanics is a higher order of being is indeed absurd. But the vehemence of the argument obscures a simpler point, which should be obvious.

Surely, the nuclear physicists were not archangels. But still, the most terrible invention in human history — remember, it was fission which made possible today's thermonuclear devices — was and is the work of people distinctly, if only slightly, above average in all the qualities we admire: self-sacrifice, intellectual honesty, personal humility, non-violence. Anyone who has met enough first-class natural scientists, and has enough experience to compare them with businessmen, cops, priests or army officers, is aware that they represent, collectively, the human personality in one of its least unattractive forms.

'My husband', said Mrs Frisch, 'is not a warlike man.' Not that he was a physical coward, or a man of inaction. At Los Alamos, he used to do critical mass experiments by adding-and-taking-away from a pile of little blocks of U-235, while a Geiger counter clicked and rattled beside him: no-one can play a closer, trickier game with an uglier form of death.

So, how did the best, or the best we can do, come to produce the worst? To turn that old faker Yeats back upon himself, 1940 was not a time when 'the best lacked all conviction': just the other way, for they were full of a passionate intensity, and an anguish which told them that the world confronted ultimate evil.

Anguish at the capacities of an evil enemy conjoined with an almost total faith in the justice of the Allied cause. 'Surely never before', said one of the Manhattan Project team, 'were the lines drawn so clearly between the children of light and the children of darkness.' No indeed, though it might be more correct to say that not for many centuries had so many people believed in the possibility of ultimate victory for the children of darkness.

I HAVE ALREADY BETRAYED my conviction that, in certain crucial degrees anyway, the human mind is capable of inventing the universe in which it dwells. We choose, said Bohr, how to think about the world.

Obviously, a political anguish acted upon the physicists. But there was another motivation as well: they were people accustomed to seeking-out the secrets of nature wherever they might be. They were accustomed to the idea that all things may be thought, and all things expressed: that was a part of the scientific tradition so deep-laid that few scientists have even been aware of it until today's debate over genetic manipulation. Von Weizsacker is right to say, of all physicists of the time, regardless of politics: 'They were out after bombs. They were out after the secrets of nature.'

In this sense, the nuclear scientists were only another part of modernism, which we may identify as that intellectual movement — in literature or elsewhere — which is based in turn upon romanticism, and claims that the free play of the mind should have no limits. As moderns, we reserve especial scorn for the suggestion that there might be thoughts to be eschewed, or emotions left unexplored.

That view has dominated conventional aesthetic thinking, but it is for notice at least that another view of things is possible. Inevitably, the anti-romantic writer will leave fewer clues than the modernist to his or her central convictions. But in Kipling, at least, they are tolerably well delineated.

Towards the end of his life — one which generally reinforced by circumstances an inner view which was bleak to begin with — he wrote *The Rabbi's Song*, based on a few words from II Samuel. Its prosody may ring oddly today, but its argument seems to be relevant to the subject discussed here.

If thought can reach to Heaven,
  On Heaven let it dwell.
For fear thy thought be given
  Like power to reach to Hell.

For fear the desolation
  And darkness of thy mind
Perplex an habitation
  Which thou hast left behind.

Let nothing linger after.
  No whimpering ghost remain
In wall, or beam, or rafter,
  Of any hate, or pain.

Cleanse, and call home, the spirit.
  Deny her leave to cast
On aught thy heirs inherit
  The shadows of her past.

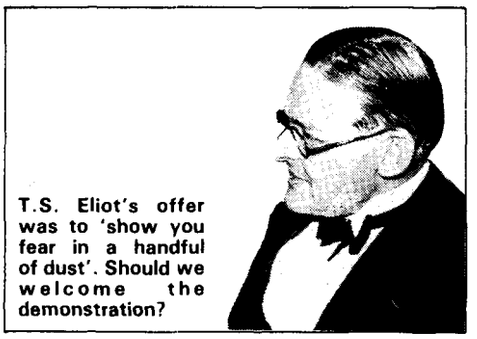
For think, in all thy sadness,
  What roads our griefs may take;
Whose brain reflects our madness
  Or whom our terrors shake.

For think, lest any languish,
  By cause of thy distress,
The arrows of our anguish
  Fly farther than we guess.

I will continue the literary excursus, at the risk of annoying literary critics, as well as physicists and theologians. It is a commonplace observation (cite: any Eng.Lit. journal) that T. S. Eliot, in *The Waste Land* and *The Hollow Men*, produced powerful images of generalised despair — 'a picture of the desiccation of modern urban society', etc etc.

Only years after the writing did Eliot himself describe *The Waste Land* as 'mere rhythmic grumbling', or others come to guess that the early Eliot poems (though powerful pieces of magic) had more to do with a sexual disenchantment peculiar to Eliot than they had to do with any felt or considered critique of modern urban society. Over the intervening years, the arrows unleashed by Eliot have lodged in many a heart and mind: people quite unfamiliar with the poetry have acquired, for instance, a belief that the world ends 'not with a bang, but a whimper'.*

* Lacking any pretension to magic, the unpleasant squib *Hysteria* has not become well-known. It may be inspected at P.34 of the *Collected Poems*.



T.S. Eliot's offer was to 'show you fear in a handful of dust'. Should we welcome the demonstration?

No-one familiar with the two biographies could doubt that the world-view of the agnostic Kipling, who watched a beloved daughter die of meningitis, and lost an equally-beloved son in the firestorm of 1914-18 — and whose every political ideal proved to have been illusory from the start — was immensely bleaker than that of the gentlemanly Anglo-Catholic 'Tom' Eliot, happily accommodated after all to the world of religious and sexual orthodoxy. Nor can one doubt that Kipling, had he chosen to express his anguish, would have reached more people, and with more devastating effect.

Yet he determined not to do so. And he refused to ease himself with any belated accession of faith.

Our lives, our tears, as water
  Are spilled upon the ground.
God giveth no man quarter,
  But God a means hath found
— Though Faith and Hope have vanished,
  And even Love grows dim —
A means whereby His banished
  Be not expelled from Him.

The message ends there, but its meaning is clear. The means is: silence. Should you discover hell, keep the news to yourself. Should you be correct, the news benefits nobody else, whatever relief you gain from spreading it. And you may, indeed, be mistaken . . .

TO SPEAK OF HEAVEN, hell and literature in a piece which deals with nuclear physics may seem out of place. But is it so? According to Robert Oppenheimer, who brought Frisch's insight to fruition, the meaning of the enterprise was that, 'in the simplest and most straightforward way, the physicists have known sin'.

Sin, if Oppenheimer be right, is too important a matter to be left to the Christian churches: and we may usefully remember that it always used to go under another alias as 'error'. In one obvious sense — and which of us could have withstood the temptation — the Western physicists were in 'error' about the Germans. Nobody in Germany approached anywhere near the intuitive insights of the *Frisch-Peierls Memorandum*, and it has emerged since that this was part of a quite general failure. The Nazi regime was incapable of harnessing science to its military ends.

This may surprise people whose knowledge of contemporary technological history is not detailed. What about ballistic missiles, jet engines, transonic aerodynamics? Weren't whole sections of the Western and Soviet aerospace industries built up, after the war, upon knowledge and talent seized from fallen Germany?

To see through this, one must first understand something of the ancestries of dif-

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J. Robert Oppenheimer was the US physicist in charge of the massive effort which turned the Bomb from intuition to actuality. Thus, he said later, the physicists came 'to know sin'.

ferent applied sciences; and one must also grasp the minutiae of historical sequence during the war years. The Nazis, of course, managed to make *some* use of science and technology, or they would have made no showing at all in such a conflict. But one must remember that pre-war Germany, even after the Exodus, was still the world's greatest treasure-house, size-for-size, of science and technology. One must think of the Nazis like science-fiction ape-men, taking over the powers of a spectacularly superior culture, and seizing into their hands weapons whose power they appreciated, but principles they grasped not at all.

The applied sciences of rocketry and aerodynamics, based firmly in the physical theories of the previous two centuries, were well established within the German system *before* the Nazis came to power. And even the Nazis could understand the uses of fast aircraft, and still faster rockets — though the chaos of their industrial arrangements, and the incoherence of their war-aims, ensured that such weaponry was never effectively deployed. But the applied results of the new physics were wholly beyond them.

Remember, the Nazi Party had an 'Aryan' physics of its own, which either rejected relativity wholly, or accepted it in carefully-limited form which (ostensibly) owed no debt to the 'Jewish' thought of Einstein.

Today, only specialists examine 'Aryan' physics, but its origins can be estimated. We may forget today just how secure and untroublesome a world-picture was presented by late-19th century science. Chemistry and physics had come neatly together with the practical establishment of the old Greek speculation about the atomic nature of matter, and almost incredibly rapid progress was being made in measuring, controlling and profiting from this well-penetrated universe. Minor puzzles remained. But they would soon be conquered, along with the few mysteries of global exploration. (The confidence with which educated folk accepted this universe was little affected by whether or not they conceived a supernatural being in overall charge.)

NOT EVEN EINSTEIN could accept all of the consequences which flowed from his oversetting of this proud tower. In so far as his mental progress may be traced, the first question appears to have presented itself in childhood: what would happen if I could run as fast as light? According to Newton, there was nothing to prevent this: acceleration, prolonged indefinitely, must accomplish the trick.

But, the child saw, Newton's system only made sense on the premise that all motion is *relative*, and no motion *absolute*. This, he saw also, could not be reconciled with James Clerk Maxwell's recently-produced equations which analysed light — and all electromagnetism — as a wave-form moving with constant velocity. The Maxwell equations were making a secure new basis for amazing developments in electrical engineering. But as Einstein and a few others saw, they were making nonsense of the foundations of 19th century thought.

We may find it hard to remember during a storm at sea, but a *wave-form* is only a state-of-affairs in motion. If we travel at the wave's own velocity, the effects of its amplitude (the rise and fall of water) are no longer perceptible. Similarly, if light is a wave motion of constant velocity (and Maxwell was demonstrably right on this), then to an observer travelling at the same speed, the light must vanish. This would show that he had achieved absolute, not relative velocity, in defiance of the whole Newtonian universe.

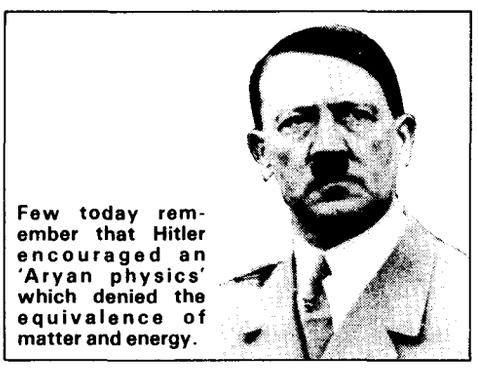
I shall not follow here the whole process by which Einstein and a few collaborators built a new universe which — if not readily graspable — was at least intellectually coherent. But those who accepted it had to surrender much: the whole conception of a commonsense world, with matter quite distinct from energy, and with causes producing effects in reliable, consistent order. Of course, a world in which energy and mass are ultimately interchangeable must be a world of *uncertainty*, as Werner Heisenberg and Niels Bohr showed. We cannot see just what happens, because the energy required in observation either alters or obscures the event. We are left, at last resort, with nothing but probabilities.

TODAY, UNCERTAINTY's certainty is accepted — roughly speaking — in fields far away from physics. (Educational researchers, for instance, admit the effect of their own presence upon their investigations.) But the acceptance often is only skin-deep. And early in the century there was real fear and resentment among people who had turned to science as a source of certainty and assurance — and from them, eventually, the Nazis drew their 'Aryan physicists'.

Not even Einstein, for all his serene daring, could accept the last consequences of his own first steps. Causality must somehow hold, he would say, adding with agnostic reverence: 'God does not play dice with the world.' Well, perhaps not. But on the evidence of Mytilene, he takes some pretty severe risks with it.

We cannot, if we are lucky, imagine the fear and loathing which gripped smaller, less stable minds: those who needed to hang onto the matter-of-fact world which our ordinary senses perceive, and which gives us so misleading a sense of security. Einstein's axiom, that nature's nature is discovered by 'the free play of the intellect', was intolerable for them: for where might speculation lead?

Their leader, Hitler, was described by Simone Weil as being distinctive because he was 'a man of pure force': the accent being on *pure*, unmixed. Hitler, she divined, thought that human affairs were governed in the end by physical forces in just the way that he (crudely) imagined the planets to be moved.



Few today remember that Hitler encouraged an 'Aryan physics' which denied the equivalence of matter and energy.

Hitler had a crude, deterministic view of the physical universe, and — for all his spiritualistic blether — saw no gap between it and the human world. Questions of good and evil, of love, honour, faith and aspiration seemed to him to have no bearing upon the course of the planets, or upon the course of life. Certainly there are many people who think this some of the time, with varying degrees of exclusiveness. Hitler believed it all of the time, entirely without remission. His achievement — rivalled, doubtless, by Stalin's — was to wrap around this void a simulacrum of humanity. Of course, the trick was but barely achieved, and the effects were hardly stable.

Superficially, the 'commonsense' world of Hitler and the Aryan physicists may seem reassuring. In truth, it is a hellish vision, for if the world is merely a mechanical device, governed by rules of cause and effect derived (apparently) from Newton, then it follows that ruthlessness is the decisive human quality. Nothing else, finally, can prevail. Virtue is merely a luxury paid for ultimately by force. But if so, why should the first trireme have loitered on the passage to Mytilene?

LET US FOCUS, not on what Einstein meant precisely by 'freedom' (though of course he did not say we were entitled to think anything), but rather upon the circumstance of daring which must attend this kind of thinking. To the man of pure force, speculation about the world is either irrelevant, or horrific. Either he *knows* what the world is: mechanical, ruthless*, predictable (which is bad enough) or he fears it is something worse (chaos beyond chaos). To him, then, knowledge is even of little attraction: especially if (unlike Hitler) he retains some element of a decent character, for it follows that the more we understand the machine, the more certain we can be about the future, and the less can be the justification for allowing others to venture upon various (and indeed erroneous) versions of it. Such is the nightmare achieved by F. A. von Hayek in *The Road to Serfdom,* when he says that the case for liberty is minimised by an understanding of the future.

We can only live sanely in a world where knowledge is admitted to increase uncertainty, but may also increase our capacity to deal with it.

No irrational leap into creative speculation is plausible in a world of pure force (no centimetric radar to find the U-boats amid Atlantic darkness). Creation occurs upon the controlled border of sanity: as Blake said

> on the Abyss of the five senses, where a flat-sided steep frowns over the present world.

And, one must remember: the thought may reach to Hell.

Einstein, we know, considered orthodox religious faith, and the eschatology of personal survival, to be little more than superstition. But a religious *attitude,* or way of thought, he considered vital to science. He was able to see beyond the edge of understanding because there was in him an unshakable faith that the world, however far beyond our com-

*Devoid of pity or compassion — OED.

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prehension, is nonetheless not chaotic or meaningless. This agnostic faith appears essentially in his famous remark that

God is sophisticated, but not malicious.*

Herein is the central Judaeo-Christian intellectual achievement: to have established in so many minds a conviction (surely not strange to other cultures) that the world is neither random, nor firmly predictable; but is a system of infinite complexity with a bias towards human goals and human reason. Marxism, not least among great ventures, is firmly anchored in this outlook, whatever the development of its mechanistic fallacies.

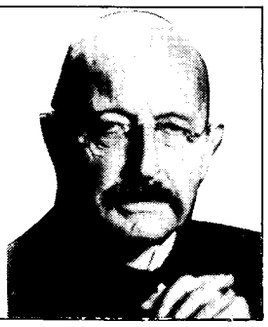
The God of the Jews was *just* (a startling invention); the gods of the Greeks were *rational* (scarcely less startling). In each case, a bias is assumed: tiny, in contingent terms, as Aeschylus makes clear — for the cycle of murder and vengeance proceeding automatically through the *Oresteia* is ended only by Athene's one casting vote, in a ballot otherwise split evenly between black and white[5] — but logically sufficient. The feat of medieval Christianity was to fuse Jewish and Greek strands into a strikingly successful blend of reason (rationalism) and faith (irrationalism), chiefly through the mind of Aquinas, such that it made almost every speculation bearable: including, finally, the speculation of the irrelevance of the Church itself, which set the conditions for the Puritan scientific explosion of the 17th century.

'I am afraid we would not have decided the right thing'

THE MEDIEVAL CHRISTIANS, no doubt, had to use some queer, mystical devices to cobble their system together (notably the Trinity). But then relativity, and quantum mechanics, in white-heat creativity, were first assembled with any old mathematical tools that came to hand. You may well say that the labour theory of value is a fairly absurd piece of intellectual equipment (and modern Marxism is discarding it). But it may have been the one thing that enabled socialism to survive against the counter-fire of the neo-classical economists and the great bourgeois sociologists. Today, there is an intellectual fashion which says we owe no debt to the medieval theologians, because of the intolerance of the Church, or the violence of the Counter-Reformation. To do this is merely to ignore *Capital* because of the excesses of Stalin.

For the modern mind, then, speculation may be quite free — in the end, we have nothing to fear, and this conviction has been acted upon. No libertarian readily qualifies this statement. But, like Kipling, I would say that it must be qualified. We must, at the least, be careful about the worlds we choose to think of.

Such a lesson emerges plainly from the experience of the German physicists. Many of



Max Planck, father-figure of pre-war German science. The Nazi salute was a gesture he could scarcely endure.

those who remained, under Hitler's rule, were among the most distinguished alive: there was Max Planck, whose account of the quantum effect provided Einstein with vital, early clues; there was Max von Laue; there was Heisenberg, von Weizsacker and a dozen others. Yet not one who remained a creative physicist also became an active Nazi. Few took the stiff Prussian virtues as seriously as von Laue, whose attitude during the war moved from open contempt for the Nazis to active non-co-operation: when he attended Arnold Berliner's funeral in the Jewish cemetery of Berlin in 1942 he dared Hitler to take action against a Nobel laureate from an old military family, and the challenge was not accepted. But if they perceived a conflict between the 'children of light and the children of darkness', they did not imagine theirs was the luminous side. The defining anecdote, perhaps, is that of Max Planck, under the Nazis, opening a new laboratory in Stuttgart:

> . . . at that time . . . you had to open such addresses with 'Heil Hitler'. Well, Planck stood on the rostrum and lifted his hand half-high, and let it sink again. He did it a second time. Then, finally, the hand came up and he said 'Heil Hitler'.[6]

'Passionate intensity' did not rule their motivations. (Could any British science have been devoted to the war had Blackett's attitude been one of icy contempt, and Chadwick's one of uneasy acquiesence?) Of this generation of physicists, Professor Baron Carl von Weizsacker is one of the few German survivors, and his Open University interview repays further examination:

> . . . within a few weeks in the beginning of '39 I was one of the 200 people in the world who realised . . . that atomic bombs would be possible, and that this would transform our political life in the world far more profoundly than Hitler was able to do . . .
>
> . . . when I understood that neutrons were produced in uranium fission and therefore a chain reaction would probably be possible and that it was quite easy to calculate roughly what would be the efficiency of such a bomb I went to see a friend who was a philosopher . . . and we sat together all night trying to think what would be the consequences . . . I don't remember exactly how we put it then and *certainly we didn't put anything into writing because we were all trained not to write down anything which the Gestapo shouldn't read* (italics added: compare Frisch and Peierls) . . . but my feeling was that this bomb will be possible, I don't know when, and that will mean that war will be transformed . . .

Von Weizsacker gives an almost painfully frank account of his motives, admitting even that he might have become a Nazi himself (partly out of an aristocrat's disdain for democracy) but for the fact that so many of his closest intellectual companions had been Jews — and that anti-semitism was therefore impossible for him. Neither he nor Heisenberg, his close friend and teacher, believed Hitler could win the war: their aim was to survive, if possible, in order to rebuild German science after the war. Heisenberg felt that it was required to 'act cautiously and diplomatically' towards this end.

> And for this an enterprise like working on nuclear energy was very good. The problem was just — but perhaps in this way we would make a bomb. And I would say that . . . in this case I would in fact do the same thing again because I'm the kind of person who is under such temptation, but given my judgement as I have it now I would not do it again. *That is, I would not again run the risk of making a bomb.* Now, this was only in the first year because after a year we saw clearly that the bomb was so difficult to make that it would be impossible . . .
>
> But I must say, to be honest, in the beginning we did not know that the bomb was so difficult . . . and Heisenberg and myself talked it over and we said, now, in case the bomb is easy to make, at least we want to be the ones who know it first. And then we would decide what to do. But I am afraid we would not have decided the right thing.

But the vital thing about the exactly contemporaneous *Frisch-Peierls Memorandum* is that it shows that the bomb is *easy* to make. It is motivated throughout by fear of that very fact. To understand, even in part, is to believe, as the text shows:

> The possible construction of a 'super-bomb'. . . has been discussed a great deal and arguments have been brought forward which seem to exclude this possibility. We wish here to point out and discuss a possibility which seems to have been overlooked . . .
>
> Bohr has put forward strong arguments for the suggestion that fission observed with slow neutrons is to be ascribed to the rare isotope U235 and that this isotope has, on the whole, a much greater fission probability than the common isotope U238. Effective methods for the separation of isotopes have been developed recently . . .
>
> This permits, in principle, the use of nearly pure U235 in such a bomb, a possibility which apparently has not so far been seriously considered. We have . . . come to the conclusion that a moderate amount of U235 would indeed constitute an extremely efficient explosive.
>
> The behaviour of U235 under bombardment with fast neutrons is not known experimentally, but . . . it can be concluded that almost every collision produces fission . . .
>
> The critical radius R_0 — ie the radius of a sphere in which the surplus of neutrons created by the fission is just equal to the loss of neutrons by escape through the surface — is . . . in a fixed ratio to the mean free path of the neutrons, and this in turn is inversely proportional to the density. It therefore pays to bring the material into the densest possible form . . . *if we assume, for U235, no appreciable scattering, and 2.3 neutrons emitted per fission, then the critical radius is found to be 0.8 times the free path.* In the metallic state (density 15) and *assuming a fission cross-section of* $10^{-23}cm^2$, the mean free path would be 2.6cm and R_0 would be 2.1cm, *corresponding to a mass of 600 grams.* A sphere of metallic U235 of a radius greater than R_0 would be explosive, and one might think of about 1kg as a suitable size for the bomb . . .
>
> *The University, Birmingham.* — *O. R. Frisch, R. Peierls*[7]

On the long road to Los Alamos and Hiroshima, much of the *Memorandum* was found erroneous in detail. But the essence of the work stood up, and particularly the value

*Raffiniert is der Her Gott; boshaft ist ihr nicht.
Raffiniert: 'refined, cunning, shrewd, clever'.
Boshaft: 'malicious, wicked, spiteful, mischievous'.

5. Aeschylus, *The Oresteian Trilogy* (tr. Philip Vellacott): *The Eumenides* (lines 734-760 approx.).

6. Alan D. Beyerchen, *Scientists Under Hitler*, Yale University Press.

7. Margaret Gowing, *Britain and Atomic Energy*, Vol. I. Appendix I gives a version of the *Memorandum*.

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given for the fission cross-section of U-235 (10 square centimetres to the 23rd minus power) was very close indeed to the mark.

Had that measurement been much different, then the fissile mass would have been impractically large, and the *Memorandum* less decisive in its impact. According to Professor Margaret Gowing, official historian of the nuclear programme, the cross-section estimate was largely the result of Rudolf Peierls' physical intuition — and it was about *four times* bigger than suggested by the experiments which had been done on what tiny quantities of U-235 had then been separated. So, $10^{-23}cm^2$ might well be called 'a free creation of the human mind'.

What Frisch and Peierls had done, as Gowing observes, was to ask the right questions, and answer them correctly from theory, without any experimental aid.

> The questions may seem obvious enough today but they were not obvious at the time. In America they were not asked for many months, until after the British work was available . . .

What kind of people could ask such questions? Not fools or cowards, we may be sure, not chilly apparatchiks. They were men whose creativity had been raised to a high pitch by the moral and emotional pressures of contemporary politics, and by a conviction that they were defending humanity against barbarism. They were sure their own side was right, and they feared that the wrong might be more powerful.

In 1949, Sir Rudolf Peierls' youthful intuition led him — correctly — to an estimate of U-235's explosive capacity which no contemporary evidence supported.

Yet an apparent puzzle appears. The *Memorandum,* as cited by the official historian, displays little sign of moral awareness, and employs a wholly dispassionate tone. ('In addition to . . . the explosion itself . . . radiations would be fatal to living beings even a long time after the explosion.') But the fact is that the *Memorandum,* for all its shattering importance, has come down to us in only fragmentary form.

Once its contents were appreciated, neither author was allowed to keep a copy. When Gowing came to write her magnificent history, she could find no copy in the Atomic Energy Authority's archives. Eventually she discovered, adrift in a cardboard box, an undated typescript carrying the text which is quoted, in part, above.

That is certainly not complete. Ronald W. Clark, in preparing the biography of Henry Tizard (Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government)[8], found among Tizard's papers a copy containing a further section: in this, the *uses* of the bomb are discussed. The basic assumption appears to be that the bomb has little, if any, legitimate military value, but the beginnings of deterrent theory are discussed with some interest.

> . . . Owing to the spread of radioactive substances with the wind, the bomb could probably not be used without killing large numbers of civilians, *and this may make it unsuitable as a weapon for use by this country.** (Use as a depth charge near a naval base suggests itself, but even there it is likely that it would cause great loss of civilian life by flooding and by the radioactive radiations) . . . If one works on the assumption that Germany is, or will be, in possession of this weapon . . . the most effective reply would be a counter-threat with a similar bomb. Therefore it seems to us important to start production as soon as possible, *even if it is not intended to use the bomb as a means of attack* . . .*

Professor Frisch told me that he recalled having written in 1940 with such considerations in mind. 'We did not wish to appear vindictive', he said — in spite of what the Nazis had done already to the Jews of Europe.

Two chronological points are worthy of attention. This first mention of nuclear-deterrence theory is meant, clearly, to apply to Hitler: if you use a fission bomb against our civilians, we will use one against the German people. Of course, we know now — what they could not have fully realised then — that Hitler, himself, would not have been deterred by such a threat. He had no interest in the German people once they had failed (as he put it) 'the challenge of history'. He would quite readily have involved them all in his own suicide, had the means been available to him.

This historical analysis illuminates one aspect of deterrent theory which has always troubled me: it assumes rationality on the part of the potential enemy. But why should this always obtain? Roughly speaking, the Soviet Union has been controlled recently by rational, if unattractive regimes. But will they remain rational when faced — for instance — with the dissolution of their satellite-system in Eastern Europe? Weaponry, surely, which is designed for a country's defence should be capable of dealing with the possibility that the enemy may, once again, be quite evil and irrational.

Children of light and children of darkness: a clear division?

Another, sadder reflection is produced by the *Memorandum*'s assumption that a weapon causing massive civilian casualties might be 'unsuitable . . . for use by this country'. Not only was the *Memorandum* written before Hitler's final lunacy was apparent: it was also written before the British Government launched its massive area-bombing assault against the German cities.

Well-meant anti-Nazi propaganda of the Thirties (Picasso's *Guernica,* for example) has obscured from our historical vision the undeniable fact that the British area-bombing programme was the first deliberate, open, large-scale assault by one modern belligerent power aimed specifically against the civilian population of a similar opponent. Nothing here is to say that the Nazis would not have done such a thing if they had thought of it, or possessed the capacity to do it (it merely happened that they did not). But it may be worth asking, if the possibility of Hamburg and of Dresden had been perceptible in 1940, whether the division between the children of light and the children of darkness would have been so perfectly discernible.

Could Frisch and Peierls have written as they did had they known they were addressing a government which was capable of deliberate, mass attack upon civilians? Although unanswerable, the question may still be useful.

THE MOST FEARSOME WEAPON of which we know was devised by good and humane people, acting without thought of self, and without thought of pride: sufficient paradox, you may think. But a further paradox is that the weapon has been used only once, and then against an enemy (Japan) whose defeat was already accomplished in principle, and was only hastened by nuclear intervention. Since 1945 there have been over 100 wars, several of them involving the established nuclear powers — America, Britain, France, the USSR and China. In no case has the bomb been used, or even convincingly threatened when the nuclear power faced defeat in its immediate enterprise. Vietnam, a non-nuclear power, has defeated two nuclear powers, America and China, in succession.

Generally, this is ascribed to the interplay of nuclear deterrents (now, of course, a six-fold system at least, and one of steadily less plausible stability). I suggest that deterrence is only a small part of the answer, and that the principal reason — as implied in the *Frisch-Peierls Memorandum* — is that nuclear weapons have no very great military value.

To say otherwise, indeed, would be to believe that our world is one in which the Western bourgeoisie might be able to impose its political will without substantial sacrifice. And it seems unlikely that God would have been so unsophisticated.

It was the political wickedness of the Nazis which caused their scientific and technical incompetence. Or: only a terrorist will use weapons indiscriminately, and pure terrorists cannot muster the moral and emotional resources required for free creativity. This does not mean that wicked regimes aren't dangerous, and aren't capable of destructive effort: only that their power on the ground may be less than it appears, as the Yugoslavs demonstrated to Stalin.

To minimise the military significance of nuclear weapons may seem odd, but the argument is worth pursuing. (Some of the practicalities were discussed recently in the *NS* by General Frank Seethaler: 7 November.) The theory of targeting nuclear weapons, in the fortunate absence of recent praxis, is complicated[9], but the essential problem is fairly simple.

Nuclear weapons are explosives, and an explosion is an event in three-dimensional space. But the space within which we conduct our politics and our warfare is effectively two-dimensional. We live upon, we defend, attack, invade or occupy what amount to flat surfaces — and the point is made, not disproven, by the fact that a wrinkle measuring 100 feet vertically may halt an advance which has come 1,000 miles. This is the geometrical reality which underlies the old military dictum that the outcome of a war — as against, perhaps, an international suicide pact — is decided in

8. Ronald W. Clark, *Tizard* .

*Emphasis added.

9. Some idea of the details can be gathered from *Arms Control: Readings from the Scientific American.*

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the end by the question of whose soldiers are standing where.

The military effect of a bomb depends upon the destruction it causes upon the surface of the earth: essentially, this will be circular in form, though circumstance will dictate whether it is the radius or the area which matters most. The attacker may wish to destroy a particular missile silo — in which case *radius* will be crucial — or wish to kill as many people as possible — in which case the *area* is important. In neither case will the desired effect be doubled by doubling the power of the bomb.

Being three-dimensional, an explosion must follow an inverse cube law. For those who've forgotten their solid geometry, this can be taken to mean that a 100 per cent increase in explosive power procures only a 50 per cent increase in area of damage, and only a 25 per cent increase in radius.

Nuclear weapons, as has often been said, could be used to destroy civilisation: today's available megatonnage adds up to five pounds of high explosive for every man, woman and child on the planet. We should not allow this dramatic calculation to obscure the fact that they are ill-adapted to traditional military tasks such as knocking out *this* mobile armoured column, or *that* infantry detachment, in order that an attacker may gain control of the territory which they previously defended. To a Soviet military 'adviser' engaged in the evil work of trying to kill widely-dispersed guerrillas among the Eritrean hills, calculations about the prospects of liquidating the human race entirely — would it be kind enough to assemble in a particular location — are of strictly zero practical interest.

IT IS BECAUSE physical space and political space have such different geometries that weaponsmiths have lately concentrated upon making smaller, not larger, bombs — 'theatre' nuclear weapons, for instance, supposedly adapted to targets which might really appear upon a battlefield. But despite these efforts, huge surplus megatonnage inevitably remains. Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton has doubted whether credible targets could be found for even 3,000 of the 7,000 'theatre' warheads now held in NATO's armouries. And even then, something might depend on what you mean by 'credible'.

The 'neutron bomb', so-called, represents an attempt, by technological manipulation, to overcome the geometrical drawbacks of a super-explosive weapon. Blast is minimised, in exchange for massive amounts of short-term lethal radiation: with the additional notion proposed that such a small-scale explosion might not be taken, in warfare, as amounting to use of the nuclear initiative. This has, so far, been excluded from Europe: in large part because of the opposition of officers like Admiral Hill-Norton, who perceive that *any* use whatever of a nuclear device will set in motion destructive processes which cannot be subjected to military calculation of any rational kind.*

But geometry provides only the framework: there is also the substance of politics to consider. In a recent issue of the *New Statesman* (17 October) Lawrence Freedman, of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, considered the problem of whether Britain's defensive posture should be one of active involvement on the ground in Europe, or one concerned more passively with the provision of US base facilities offshore. Some may oppose either, but they should nonetheless attend to Freedman's analysis:

> The choice depends on a view as to whether it is the *stable alliance structure* or the *military standoff* which has been the major cause of peace in Europe over the past three decades.

Dr John Beckman, writing in the same series (*NS* 28 November) approached this same problem — is peace due to the fear of war, or the lack of cause for war? — from a natural-scientist's viewpoint:

> Empirically it is true that no nuclear wars have occurred in the past 35 years . . . It is not wise, however, to be sanguine about an inductive proof of the theory of deterrence based on these . . . years of experience.

We have lived through a period of stable, not to say rigid, alliance-structures: the Warsaw Pact on the one hand, and the US-dominated NATO system on the other. It is now a newspaper commonplace to say that these orthodoxies are endangered: the Soviets being faced with rebellion among their East European subjects, and the concept of Atlanticism weakened by the re-emergence of reactionary isolationism in America. But stability, surely, is alien to Europe's nature? Christopher Hitchens, the other day, quoted George Mangakis' words, written in 1971 when he was imprisoned under the Greek colonels:

> We tremble for the fate of this great country which we call Europe. We know that hope hangs upon Europe, and that is the reason why it is constantly threatened. It is very dangerous to nourish the hopes of mankind. Why else should Greece have become enslaved? . . . They are afraid of Europe — that long suffering fountainhead of ideas . . . The simple citizens of Europe nurture these seeds, keeping them alive thanks to the restless spirit which is so much a part of their being.

'Stability', in politics, is a many-edged word: surely the real point is that never before have so many of Europe's cities achieved, or come close to achieving, at the same time, that strange dynamic balance which we can scarcely define, but usually recognise, as lawful liberty. The fact is so implausible, and surrounded by so much danger, that one scarcely dares to mention it. Yet it must be mentioned, because the possibility just begins to exist now

Writers in the *NS* series on Britain's defence have questioned whether deterrence has been the major cause of peace since 1945.

Defence with a split mind

cience and defence

The tactics of dissuasion

of an alliance of European democracies — I would use language slightly different from Mr Freedman's, and speak not of a 'stable alliance', but of a defensible equilibrium.

DEFENSIBLE, and defended, it would have to be. Nor can there be much doubt about the principal axis of danger. America, for all the weight of its presence, neither has, nor ultimately needs true client-states in Europe. Given courage, patience and time, America's relationship with Europe may be negotiable.

The Soviet position is otherwise. Liberty, if it manages to survive in Western Europe, cannot do other than leak across the border. And

Dr Henry Kissinger epitomises the commonplace view that the Soviet system is stronger than ours because it is ruthless and authoritarian.

freedom in Eastern Europe, however qualified, is a domestic problem for the USSR: one needs no belief in Soviet aspirations to world-wide hegemony in order to see that.

One must work upon the evidence available, which suggests that the Soviet Union is an evil, authoritarian regime which will invade — if it appears convenient — any contiguous piece of territory which might be necessary to its security.

If Europe — and perhaps the world — is to survive, then our emerging democratic alliance must be capable of resisting such ventures without setting in train the cataclysmic process of nuclear warfare (I am sure Admiral Hill-Norton and others are right when they say that one nuclear weapon, however limited, will be enough to do the trick.)

For this to be done successfully, the basic requirement is to avoid the error — or, in Oppenheimer's words, 'sin' — which was made last time Europe confronted tyranny, and sprang from overestimating the oppressive enemy, and ascribing to him virtue which he did not possess. That error brought the Hiroshima bomb into being, and brought about its use: today, the same error lives on in the fantastic and still-growing profusion of Western nuclear 'devices' and delivery-systems for them.

Most of them could find no targets (other than terrorist ones) within the geometry of the political world. But they are not there for any such military purpose. They exist to bolster Western psyches against a fear that Soviet power may be intrinsically superior to anything in the West. And that fear comes down not to numbers of tanks, planes and men-in-arms — though such numbers are often cited. It rests on the notion that the Soviet system must be more potent because it is more ruthless.

For 20 years, one of the most eloquent among many exponents of this central pessimism has been Dr Henry Kissinger, and it is not accidental that Kissinger should also have been a persistent advocate of 'limited' use of nucelar weapons. William Shawcross gave a useful summary of the Kissinger doctrine.

* I should emphasise that Hill-Norton is in favour of Britain retaining other forms of deterrent.

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Any Western defence policy, to be credible, will have to be credible to the workers of Gdansk, and elsewhere in Eastern Europe.

In *The Necessity for Choice,* Kissinger endorsed the idea that a missile gap existed between the US and the USSR . . . It has been said that his early experience of the Weimar republic and then fascism impressed him with the irreducible will and purpose of totalitarianism. Certainly he appeared to believe that democracy seemed an ineffectual David against dictatorship.

The Soviet achievements were due to 'greater moral toughness, to a greater readiness to run risks, both physical and moral'. The Russians were 'iron-nerved', they analysed events with a ruthless objectivity . . . They were cold-blooded, logical, without compunction . . .[10]

True, largely. But can citizens adhering to the Soviet system achieve the moral and emotional state which free creativity requires, and upon which, at least, the potency of an industrial society must depend? The evidence says: not any more. Although the inheritance available to the Soviet bureaucrats was not quite so dazzling as the one the Nazis squandered, it was very great, because at one time the Revolution's creative fire reached without discrimination into poetry, chemistry, graphic art, physics, physiology. Today, it is almost burnt out: the process having begun, as one might expect, with pure science. So much attention was paid to the overtly political aspects of Andrei Sakharov's *My Country and the World* that few people noticed his lament for the once-magnificent structure of Soviet creative science.

Andrei Sakharov, before his political disilluisonment, led Russia's H-bomb team. Today, he believes, authority has devitalised Soviet science.

With Gdansk and Warsaw in mind (and Prague,Budapest,Prague,Kabul) we must not wish away the contingent facts of Soviet military strength. But we must not imagine a world in which their evil and their ruthlessness is a source of fertility and strength to them, for in such a world they will either defeat us outright, or make us into a mirror of themselves, or involve us with them in nuclear apocalypse.

That, in part, is what the Nazis did to us. The bomb which haunts us today is a product of awesome potency of the European mind, which can conceive almost anything: including, as it turns out, the end of the world. In the first instance, I have argued, the discovery of nuclear explosives was the result of a movement in science which was paralleled in literature and in intellectual life generally: the modernist idea, within which all speculations are permissible. (Kipling, with his astonishing sensitivities, was perhaps the first to see that it wouldn't do.) As von Weizsacker said, to go out after the secrets of nature was to go out after making bombs.

Trust our poets, and be cautious about our governments

But that alone was not enough. Progress towards nuclear explosive — and it's important to remember that thermonuclear weapons could not have been made without the rather more surprising discovery of fission — did not go in a straight line, but was 'kinked'. The idea was 'discovered', buried, and discovered again under the stress of a particular political crisis. I have argued that, the modernist impulse notwithstanding, there is some slight bias in our human nature which makes us draw back from the heart of certain fires. More recently, scientists have drawn back from the idea that speculation and inquiry can be wholly open-ended in the field of genetic manipulation: though one might question whether such doubts would endure if the line between the children of light and the children of darkness were once again to appear utterly unambiguous.

One way in which this bias of the world appears is in the paradox with which this inquiry began: how did it come about that the worst weapon was made by the best people? This comes about because our intellectual capacity is not a free-standing quality —though that's the assumption behind the powerful image of the cold, remorseless weaponsmith — but rather is intimately governed by our physical, moral and emotional life. There is no world in which totalitarianism could harness those energies of Niels Bohr's which von Weizsacker so vividly describes. One may put this Simone Weil's way, and say simply that Hitler was wrong: that the world is not, finally, a world of pure force. Or one may borrow a maxim from Christian theology (and one need not borrow the Church's other trappings) to say that the greatest danger in the world is not evil, but good in error.

It was a particular error in the Forties to assume too much of the governments of the 'children of light', and to think that a weapon whose only real usefulness lies in civilian slaughter would be 'unsuitable for use by this country'. Yet the loss is not complete if a correct lesson is drawn from it: that nobody, in this modern world, dare trust any state, or any government, completely. If patriotism says we must, then patriotism becomes a lethal ailment. Allegiance, however deep-felt, must always remain conditional.

In practical fact, the nuclear mechanism can never be forgotten — for pedestrian minds can follow a path blazed by genius, just as an uncomprehending Treasury can apply a version of Keynesianism. And so safety, which was only a Victorian illusion anyway, will never return to our world. But our world can be made less dangerous, even survivable, if we can base our policy, without sentimentality, upon a belief that a bias exists in our favour, and Athene's casting ballot, if necessary, will be for us.

The outcome, in policy terms, would not be pacifism. One of the oddest results of the nuclear-deterrent system — which has long been sold to us, you will recall, as a cheap way of defending liberty — is that it has obscured from popular consciousness the most important strategic fact about the balance of powers. How many of our people have forgotten that the nations of Western Europe, compared to Russia and its dubious vassals in Europe — are simply more populous, as well as richer, immensely more advanced technologically, and, for all our quarrels across customs barriers, almost unmeasurably more coherent in political terms? To construct a defensive system for Europe which will move away from nuclear dependence will surely involve sacrifice and creativity, but to say *a priori* that it cannot be done must be implausible.

Danger will always be present, so poets and scientists will always have to be careful what they say. There is no escape from the fact that the arrows of our anguish, once launched, follow no predictable path. For something like this reason Plato recommended that we should keep all poets securely locked up: but it should be clear by now that this will not work, for there are no bars quite strong enough. In the end, we have no alternative but to trust our poets, and be cautious about our governments. Perhaps I may close this long, perhaps impertinent, but honestly-meant inquiry with a verse addressed by a young man to a lover just before the great crisis of 1939-45 (which, to our loss, he did not survive). The writer is Keith Douglas:

Intelligences like black birds
come on their dire wings from Europe. Sorrows
fall like the rooks' clatter on house and garden.
And who will drive them back before we harden?
You will find, after a few tomorrows
like this, nothing will matter but the black birds.

You will not paint lips on your lips
or beautify yourself in anyone's eyes;
I shall never write a word to escape,
our life will take on a hard shape;
and then if we are spared we shall not arise
to hold the world up when it finally slips.

So keep a highlight in your handsome eye;
still be fastidious, and I will write
some well-intentioned words. To keep the heart
still sensitive as air will be our part,
always to think, and always to indite
of a good matter, while the black birds cry.

10. *Sideshow: Kissinger, Nixon and the Destruction of Cambodia.* Of course, the progenitor of Cambodia's bombardment has shown himself prepared to take 'moral risks' just as freely as a Soviet leader.

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A Mad

by ROGER WODDIS

Alice was just saying to herself, 'If one only knew which road to take —' when she was a little startled by seeing the Cheshire Cat framed on a bough of a tree a few yards off. It was grinning from ear to ear, and seemed pleased to be the object of Alice's — or anyone's —curiosity.

'Cheshire Puss,' said Alice, 'would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?'

'That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,' said the Cat.

'Anywhere,' said Alice, 'so long as it's a house with people in it.'

'I don't know about *a* house, but in *that* direction —' the Cat said, waving its paw round, 'you'll find *the* House. It's full of mad people.'

'But I don't want to go among mad people,' Alice remarked.

'Oh, you can't help that,' said the Cat. 'They're all mad there — raving mad. Like the rest of us. I'm mad. You're mad.'

'How do you know I'm mad?' said Alice.

'You must be,' said the Cat, 'or you wouldn't want to go there.'

There was a table set out on a terrace in front of the House, and the March Hare and the Hatter were having tea at it; a Dormouse was sitting between them, adding up an Employment Bill and muttering to itself, 'Two million, carry three, that's four million — ' The other two were using it as a cushion, resting their elbows on it and talking over its head.

'I spy strangers!' they cried out when they saw Alice coming.

'I'm *not* a stranger!' said Alice indignantly, 'I'm an elector!' and she sat down in a large arm-chair at one end of the table.

'Then you ought to keep your mouth shut,' said the Hatter. 'Why is a recession like a rolling-pin?'

'Oh, I like riddles,' said Alice, adding after she'd pondered for a moment, 'but I can't guess the answer to that one. What *is* the answer?'

'Don't be silly,' said the March Hare. 'We only think up the questions. You can't expect us to know the answers as well.'

'What are you doing here, anyway?' said the Hatter. 'You ought to be in the Public Gallery.'

'I tried,' said Alice, 'but they wouldn't let me in.'

'Of course not,' said the Hatter. 'That's why it's called a Public Gallery. It's the same as a Public School. Goodness gracious, is that the time? My watch says half-past-the-quarter.'

'Then it's wrong,' said Alice. 'If you want the correct time, you've only to look at Big Ben.'

At the mention of the word 'Ben', they all dived under the table and started chattering among themselves in a very agitated fashion.

'Come on out,' said Alice. 'I don't know why you're making such a fuss.'

'It's all part of the Democratic Process,' said the Hatter, as they emerged from beneath the table and resumed their seats. 'It doesn't matter what you *think*, so long as you *look* concerned — that's what counts.'

'Looking concerned *and* counting, that's even better,' said the Dormouse, shaking its head gravely and ticking off on its paws, 'five million, six million — '

Here the Dormouse was interrupted by the Hatter, who suddenly burst into song:

'Twinkle, twinkle, little wet!
How did we get into debt?
Exports low and imports high,
Like a see-saw in the sky.'

'Let's change the subject,' yawned the March Hare. 'I vote the Dormouse tells us a story.'

'Once upon a time there were three members of a gang,' the Dormouse began, 'and their names were Shirley, Davy and Willy; and they lived at the bottom of a well — '

'What did they live on? asked Alice.

'They lived on sour grapes,' said the Dormouse.

'They couldn't have done that,' Alice remarked; 'they'd have been ill.'

'So they were,' said the Dormouse; '*very* ill. But that didn't prevent them from making important speeches on all manner of things beginning with an M, such as moderation, and mixed economy, and moonshine —'

Just then a White Rabbit with pink eyes and a foot in plaster, a stick in one hand and a volume of Swift in the other, came hobbling by in a great hurry.

'Oh dear! Oh dear!' muttered the Rabbit to itself, 'I hope I haven't left it too late!'

'Too late for what?' asked Alice.

'Office!' cried the Rabbit, hopping into the House as swiftly as he was able.

The Dormouse was still droning on with his tale, when the Hatter exclaimed impatiently, 'Let's make him *really* wet!' And he and the March Hare up-ended the Dormouse and started pushing it headfirst into the tea-pot.

During this a one-man team in workmen's garb appeared and began clearing the table.

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;a-Party

illustrations by JOHN MINNION

'The party's over, chums,' he said. 'The cuts, you know — sorry, but I've got my orders.'

'Who gave you such stupid orders?' enquired the Hatter indignantly.

'You did, stupid,' replied the worker, 'Mind your backs.' And he whisked off the table-cloth, and set about removing the chairs.

He was spurred on in his task by the Queen of Cuts, who suddenly strode on, blonde hair flying and screaming, 'Off with their heads! Off with their heads! Everything must be cut —including you!' (This last to Alice). 'Either you or your head must be off! Take your choice!'

Alice took her choice, and hurried off to the other end of the terrace, where she came upon a Griffen and a Mock Turtle, who was sighing as if his heart would break.

'What's wrong with him?' asked Alice.

'He's got his sums wrong again,' said the Griffen. 'He just can't add up.'

'That's because I went to the Milton Friedman School of Economics,' said the Mock Turtle sadly, his eyes filling with tears. 'They only teach you useless things there.'

'What sort of things?' enquired Alice.

'Bleeding and Blighting, of course, to begin with,' the Mock Turtle replied; 'and then the different branches of Economics — Attrition, Reaction, Underproduction and Recession.'

'That must have left you in the soup,' Alice ventured to say.

'Oh, it did,' said the Mock Turtle, his voice choked with sobs. *'Deep* in.'

'What a pity!' Alice said sympathetically.

'Yes, in fact the Mock Turtle made up a song about it,' said the Griffen. 'Sing *"Pitiful Soup"* to her, old chap.'

The Mock Turtle sighed deeply, and began to sing in heart-rending tones:

'Pitiful Soup, so poor in taste,
Brimming with industrial waste!
Who would not feel his spirits droop
After a bowlful of pitiful Soup?
Soup of the bankrupt, pitiful Soup!
Pee - itiful Soo - oop!
Pee - itiful Soo - oop!
Soo - oop of the bankrupt,
Pitiful, pitiful Soup!'

The Mock Turtle was just about to begin a second chorus, when a cry of 'The trial's beginning!' was heard in the distance.

'Come on!' cried the Griffen, and, taking Alice by the hand, it hurried off, while faintly behind them, carried on the breeze, came the melancholy words:

'Soo - oop of the bankrupt,
Pitiful, pitiful Soup!'

When they arrived at the Chamber, where the trial was being held, Alice found

only a handful of members there, most of them lolling half-asleep on the benches.

'Where are all the others?' Alice whispered to the Griffen.

'They're still at lunch,' replied the Griffen. 'It's only half-past four, you know.'

'And those that *are* here seem to be dozing,' Alice remarked, in some surprise.

'It's not to be wondered at — they're exhausted,' said the Griffen. 'They've been awake all morning.'

'Hold your tongues, or I'll have you all beheaded!' the Queen of Cuts, who was seated in a high-backed chair, suddenly screamed, causing several members, who had been snoring loudly, to awake with a start.

It was then that Alice noticed a curious appearance in the air: it was the Cheshire Cat, or rather its head, the rest of its body being outside the frame and invisible.

'Let us hear the accusation!' shouted the Queen, adding furiously — 'but cut it short!'

The White Rabbit rose from the front bench opposite and spoke as follows:

'The Queen of Nuts, she made some cuts,
All in a heartless way:
The Hatter authorised the cuts,
And made the people pay!'

'Off with his head!' yelled the Queen, and members murmured 'Hear, hear' in a long, drawn-out rumbling sound, as if they were in pain.

'If I may continue —' began the White Rabbit.

'Behead that Rabbit!' shrieked the Queen. 'Suppress him! Pinch him! Off with his ears! Cut off his tail! Clear the Chamber! Who Goes Home?'

'I do,' said Alice firmly, who felt she had had enough.

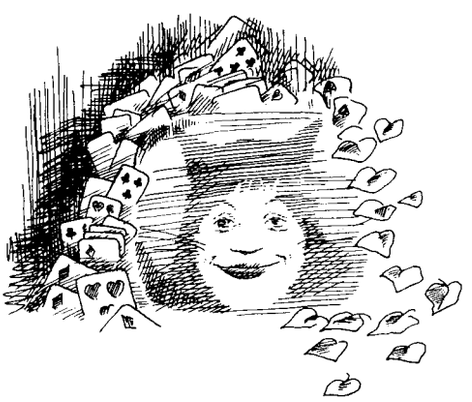
'Off with her head!' the Queen shouted, turning purple. Nobody moved.

'Who cares for you?' said Alice. 'You're nothing but a pack of cards!'

At this the whole pack rose up into the air and came fluttering down upon Alice, like so many dead leaves.

The Cheshire Cat, grinning wider than ever and slowly beginning to vanish, said, 'Cheshire Cat. News at Ten. Westminster.'

And faded to black.



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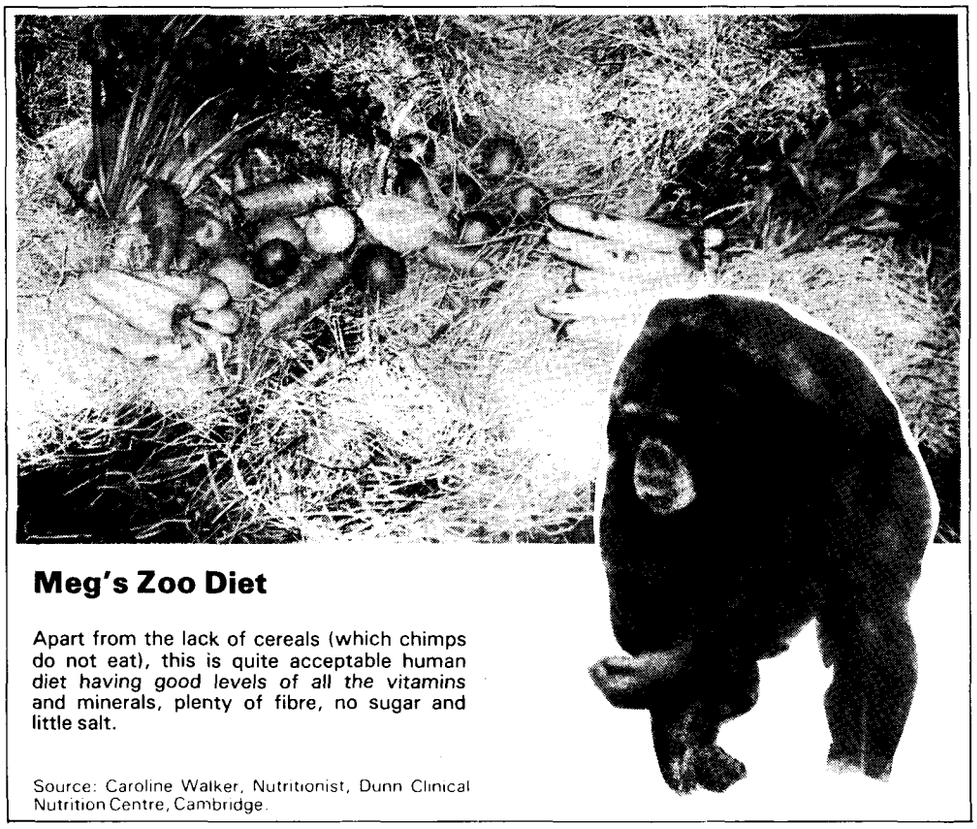
The Cordon Bleu chimp who came to dinner

HANNAH WRIGHT, our food writer, presents a cautionary tale about the perils of institutional food.

MEG glared over the top of Part 9 of the Cordon Bleu Cookery Course magazine at the breakfast which Niall Ormerod was laying out. 'All men are selfish brutes,' she thought. 'Take, take, take, while I slave away for them year after bloody year. Nearly thirty-one years since I arrived, a shivering youngster from Sierra Leone, and what's it been since then? Fourteen kids to bring up, plus pulling the crowds from dawn to dusk and only one day off a year. Thousands of pounds I make them, and what do I get? Two apples, two bananas, two carrots, an onion and an orange for breakfast. Coarse and uncooked — I wouldn't give it to a gibbon. And it's not as if they don't know how to do themselves proud,' she thought, gazing once more at the photograph of a pineapple and whipped cream gateau as she chewed a bitter carrot. 'On the rare occasions they deign to give me a pineapple how does it come? A gateau or a *mousse en surprise?* Not bloody likely, just chucked at me it is, core and all, not so much as a glacé cherry on its spikes. Now if I could only live in a human institution instead of a zoo,' she thought, turning the page to her favourite photo: *le poivrat* (glazed pears in cinnamon flaky pastry with loads of whipped cream).

She finished her breakfast and slid the magazine back beside its 71 companions in the navy-blue box files that had arrived one day in 1970 addressed to Miss Meg Chim-Panzee, The Island, Chester Zoological Gardens. She walked out of her sleeping quarters into the yard. It was the 19th of December and very cold out there. 'Well,' she thought, 'I'm not going to put myself out for my public in this weather, not on a few crudities I'm not. I'll just beg some crisps off those kids.'

Just then her name was called by a man standing on the public side of the moat which surrounded her island. She was fond of old Peter Wait, the curator of mammals, and didn't believe he knew what unrefined food Niall Ormerod forced her to eat. But when she got as near to him as the water permitted, years of frustration finally found a voice and she complained long and loud of the coarse, raw food she had to endure. Peter Wait explained that her diet was as near as possible to the diet of wild chimpanzees but modified by what was available and what other zoos found successful. 'New animals cost thousands so we have to keep you as healthy as possible. Whenever there's a big crowd of visitors and you animals get given forbidden white bread, sweets and so on, the next day you all have diarrhoea — "Monday morning disease" as we call it. It is because of the coarse, raw food as you call it that you are the oldest female chimpanzee in Britain." Well, if that's the case, why don't you eat it yourself?' said Meg and stamped off in a rage.



Meg's Zoo Diet

Apart from the lack of cereals (which chimps do not eat), this is quite acceptable human diet having good levels of all the vitamins and minerals, plenty of fibre, no sugar and little salt.

Source: Caroline Walker, Nutritionist, Dunn Clinical Nutrition Centre, Cambridge.

THE DAY PASSED slowly. Lunch was eaten *al fresco* with the other chimpanzees — peanuts, hard-boiled eggs, cheese, white cabbage and carrots. Meg ate little, here mind all swirling images of *soufflé au fromage* (puffing up dark gold against the elegant white dish) and of the ice which had began to form on the water round the island.

She sat for some time as the day began to dim and a little snow to fall. 'So even Peter Wait's a twister,' she thought. 'All that gibberish about raw food. Thinks he can make a monkey out of me but I am a Cordon Bleu chimp and know how humans really eat.' A door slammed behind her. It was Niall with her hot milk with malt extract, salt and vitamin drops in it. Meg rushed at him, knocked him down and, clutching the nearest file of the Cordon Bleu magazines, took off three-legged across the ominously cracking ice, to find the human institution of her dreams.

Very late that night after a long and arduous journey, Meg eased herself and her precious box file between the bars of a cell in a huge London prison and on to an upper bunk.

'She investigated the thin grey slices of meat'

She woke to the clatter of tin plates on breakfast trays. One chap sat down directly beneath her. Porridge, a small dry-looking square of something called goulash ('funny,' she thought), four slices of white bread, over which the prisoner was carefully distributing a small pat of margarine. He buried his face in a pint of tea and a hairy black arm shot down and nicked the white bread (wholemeal only at the zoo). As a bitter argument began beneath, Meg slid out through the bars, the bread balanced on the box file.

After a short 'recce' near the kitchens, Meg found an empty punishment cell and a steel rafter above the serving trolleys. That first dinner-time an empty belly made her very daring. She investigated the thin grey slices of meat, potatoes and slushy cabbage, the sponge squares and the custard, as the warder cook was still filling the trays. It was difficult stuff to handle, especially face down, but she was back in her cell before disappointment began to dawn: 'It tastes bloody dead and there's nothing to get your teeth into.'

THE MEALS that followed were no better, worse mostly, because she only got the remnants which had dried up on their slow journey round the landings: boiled bacon and pease pudding, bacon and egg, sometimes curry and rice or soup with carrot and onion, rice pudding and nearly always cabbage, 'goulash' and white bread and marge. Her disappointment grew but with it a thick lethargy, so she stayed on month after month. Sundays were a little better. There were hard-boiled eggs for breakfast, a funny-tasting minced chicken called 'supreme' for dinner, often cheese, salad and a piece of fruit for tea and sometimes little jellies with mock cream on top. Her gums began to swell and her lips had cracks at the corners. For hours at a time she lay studying the photos in the Cordon Bleu course. *Gateau au Chocolat,* decorated with tiny rolled spillikins of black chocolate interspersed with butter cream. 'I don't get it. It's a human zoo all right but the food's bloody worse, if anything.' At last it clicked. These prisoners were 'offenders', therefore the food must be part of the punishment and not real human food at all.

'Soft white rolls, bread, butter, jam and slab cake'

She left the prison, but not so easily as the had arrived. Being much less nimble now, she had a near miss with a guard dog in the exercise yard. As she landed, flurried and breathless, on the far side of the wall, the roar and fumes of London broke over her.

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Prison Diet

This diet reaches the government's dietary goals in two respects: it is low in sugar and fat. Otherwise there is a serious shortage of fresh fruit and vegetables. With poor cooking practices and much reheating it is probable that Vitamin C and the B Vitamins Riboflavin and Folate are almost entirely destroyed. (Vitamin B deficiencies may cause skin diseases and depression and other behavioural disturbances.) Scurvy is certainly a possibility. Although an exact calorie count has not been possible, it seems likely that prisoners on this diet will lose weight.

Source: Caroline Walker, Nutritionist, Dunn Clinical Nutrition Centre, Cambridge.

She skuttled shakily down a side street thinking, 'Six months in that hole and I'm bloody senile — can't cope at all.' Suddenly she saw a sign: 'Home for the Elderly'. 'That's where I belong,' she thought. 'At least they're not being punished there.'

In less than an hour, Meg was reclining in the spare blanket cupboard, digesting a breakfast of cornflakes with milk and sugar, beans on toast, toast and marmalade and sweet tea. 'What a piece of cake that was — no warders, no security. This is the sweet life.' A lunch of fried egg, chips and peas, jelly and ice cream; a supper of packet soup plus soft white rolls, bread, butter, jam and slab cake; and a night cup of hot (sweetened drinking) chocolate confirmed this though she composed a short, colourful lecture on Cordon Bleu presentation to be delivered to the superintendent.

SOME MONTHS later, Meg had gained so much weight that she could barely struggle in between the piles of blankets. Her teeth, back and legs ached, her gums bled, and she was very constipated. Only a year ago she could disappear up a tree with a large bunch of bananas. Now she just mostly sat.

Late one night, when Meg was heaving herself back having once again failed to move her bowels, she saw an ambulance arriving. The word 'hospital' exploded in her mind. She would get her health back.

'Roast potatoes, creamed potatoes, Christmas pudding with brandy butter'

Although it was the middle of the night when the ambulance reached the big new hospital, Meg was now so slow and clumsy that she went to two road accidents and a twin birth before she succeeded in leaving the ambulance unobserved. Then all the bloody people around were a right nuisance, but finally she squashed herself into the locker of a very old, very sick woman in a side ward. It was an extremely tight fit and Meg had only chosen it as an emergency alternative to walking slap bang into the night nurse.

Meg stuck her face round the corner of the locker as the door burst open and a domestic in a pale blue overall hurried over to the bed with a covered tray. 'Happy Christmas, Mrs Smith.' Mrs Smith only bubbled a little. The domestic left. Meg eased her left foot out from Mrs Smith's Nivea and lifted the tray cover. There were cornflakes with milk and sugar, bacon and fried egg, white toast and marmalade and tea. Meg loved all the doll's tea set dishes, cartons and packets and was finally exploring the bottom of the marmalade pot with her tongue when Mrs Smith opened her eyes, struggled into a sitting position and drank her tea. From under the bed, Meg saw the door open and a nurse in stout black shoes congratulated Mrs Smith on her improved appetite.

Meg found a slightly more capacious cupboard and dozed sitting on her box file till lunch arrived. There was roast turkey and cranberry sauce, garden peas, brussels sprouts, roast potatoes, creamed potatoes, game chips, Christmas pudding with brandy sauce and a mince pie. It looked as pretty as the pictures in the Cordon Bleu course. However, Meg had severe heartburn afterwards and didn't want any tea, which was as well because Mrs Smith's sister arrived and they had tea and Christmas cake together. The sister left and Meg enjoyed her supper of packet cream of tomato soup, home-cured gammon (and salad, but Meg left that. 'No more zoo food for me.') and sherry trifle. After this and Mrs Smith's evening cup of chocolate, Meg was past precaution and slept soddenly on the other bed. Before dawn she spent a long miserable session failing once again to empty her bowel. It was now three weeks since she had succeeded in voiding some hard little droppings. There was a dull but persistent pain in the top of her left leg. She spent the day in the cupboard, improving Mrs Smith's appetite when she could, and nicked three chocolate bars from the hospital trolley. The next day she felt even worse. Suddenly a great longing for grass and trees consumed her and she made her way painfully towards the exit. There were far more people about that day, and she was avoiding a group of nurses when she backed straight into a man in a dark grey suit.

MEG SAT down in the corridor and wept. Her quest had ended in illness and recapture. The man, whose name was Maurice Frohn, was a consultant general surgeon. He took her into an empty room and asked what was wrong. Meg explained about the coarse food she had endured at the zoo for many years and how she had come to find a real human institution where real Cordon Bleu food was served.

'You see, Meg,' said Mr Frohn, 'refined food is slowly killing you. Before about 1880 only the rich could afford it, and now people still like to ape the food of the upper classes. But this sort of diet leads to all kinds of entirely preventable conditions: first tooth decay in children, then appendicitis in the teens, then obesity and increasing, unsatisfied appetite. Then come the gall stones or peptic ulcer, the chronic constipation and the diverticular disease. In old age, diabetes and arthero-sclerosis, strokes and heart attacks. And all from the same cause. Institutions are the worst offenders because refined and convenience foods have a long shelf life. So when you are old and ill from overconsumption you lie debilitated and bedridden and eat hospital stodge and sweets and squashes from the hospital trolley. And that finally kills you. If I were you I'd run for your life back to the zoo.'

Peter Wait never passed the chimps' island these days without a twinge of sadness. Meg had been a grumpy old girl, but he couldn't quite get over her strange disappearance. On New Year's Eve 1981 he saw a grossly fat and decrepit-looking chimpanzee sitting beside an empty box file. His eyes filled, and it was some minutes before he noticed the thousands and thousands of shredded pieces of coloured paper floating in the moat.

Home for the Elderly

Given what is now known about vitamins and the elderly, this diet is really dreadful. Fresh fruit and vegetables are entirely absent, and deficiencies will be the same as the prison diet with the additional hazards of sugar and saturated fat. The starch level is quite good.

Hospital, Christmas Day Menu

Much too high in saturated fat, high in sugar and salt. The same lack of fresh foods as in the other two with Vitamin C Folate and Riboflavin almost certainly deficient. The food is also low in cereal fibre. It is perfectly easy to have festive meals which are good for people.

Source: Caroline Walker, Nutritionist, Dunn Clinical Nutrition Centre, Cambridge.

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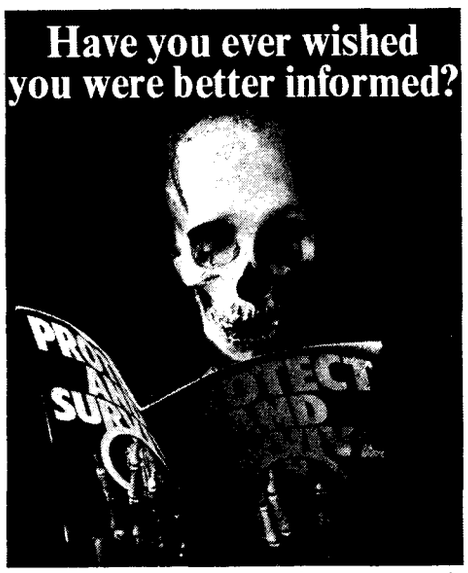
Do you ever wish you were better informed?

KEN WORPOLE celebrates the popular impact of two politically committed photo-montage artists, Klaus Staeck and Peter Kennard.

JUST AS the photo-montage art of John Heartfield came to dominate German visual aesthetics in the 1930s, so West Germany today has another political montagist of equal stature: Klaus Staeck. Staeck has risen to international prominence in the course of the 1970s with his highly energetic espousal of mass production techniques to convey a series of biting political images to millions of West German workers. His exhibitions have been ripped down by angry CSU/CDU parliamentary deputies, and subjected to numerous legal attempts to have his work banned. Fortunately, Staeck is also a practising lawyer, and in an interview in *Studio International* in 1976, he stated that he uses the law in the same way that he uses his art: 'to make reality by producing conflict'.

Since the beginning of the 1970s he has worked almost exclusively through the media of posters and postcards. In 1971 one of his early poster works caused sufficient controversy for him to realise the potential of the form. This controversy started in Nuremburg where a lavish festival to celebrate a Dürer anniversary was to be held. Staeck produced a poster on which he super-imposed over the famous Dürer drawing of an elderly woman, 'The Mother', the slogan: 'Would you rent this woman a room?' This left a bad taste in the mouths of the organisers and angered respectable society at large.

National controversy of a very bitter kind followed the year after when, in 1972, election year, he designed a simple white poster which just contained the text: 'The rich must get richer. Vote CDU.' Some 10 court actions followed against Staeck as the poster began to appear all over Germany. Staeck's publishing initiative alone produced and sold some 300,000 copies of this poster and postcard. Another poster designed that year and which sold 200,000 copies was one showing a modern luxury house set in its own grounds with the text: 'German workers! The SPD (Social Democratic Party) is going to take away your villas in Tessin!' (Tessin is a Swiss canton highly favoured as a place of residence by the German bourgeoisie.)



First publication of a new photo-montage by Peter Kennard.

'German workers! The SPD plans to take away your villas in Tessin' by Klaus Staeck.

Staeck has logically carried through the ideas of the prophetic cultural critic Walter Benjamin who, some 30 years after his death, is now more influential than ever. In two essays which have inspired numerous paths of critical work, 'The Work of Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction' and 'The Author as Producer', Benjamin argued that serious but challenging aesthetic issues would be raised when the visual arts lost their aura as unique artefacts in an age of mass production. New reprographic methods mean that potentially everybody can have a new painting or a photograph, rather than having to travel a hundred or a thousand miles to see the original. Staeck celebrates this democracy of cultural production, and himself refuses to sign individual posters 'so that in 50 years time they will become more valuable'. And, even more significantly, by working directly with the printers who produce his work on the basis of joint discussions about the images and effects desired, he is able to produce an artefact without recourse to the production of an 'original'.

Because 'there are no originals', he has written, 'all speculation with works of art is ruled out from the start'.

Mass production brings in economies of scale. As Staeck points out, 'You can buy a complete exhibition from me for 140 marks (£35), which anyone can afford, elsewhere you seldom get even a print for that kind of money'. This explains why at any one time in West Germany there can be up to a hundred exhibitions of his work showing in various cities, and why his work as an artist has been taken up with a rare interest by trade unions, colleges, schools and youth hostels, all of whom have been able to buy complete exhibitions for permanent holding.

He first exhibited in Britain in the 1974 'German Month' at the ICA, together with six other political artists. Staeck's contribution to this exhibition became the subject of yet another heated row in the Bonn parliament culminating in the Minister of Foreign Affairs expressing official disapproval of Staeck's work as being in any way representative of German society. The writer Heinrich Böll wrote to the Government protesting on Staeck's behalf. A year later Staeck reciprocated Böll's act of artistic solidarity when he produced a poster criticising a new CDU attack on Böll. At a conference of CDU parliamentary deputies that year, party leader Herr Casstens attacked Böll's novel, *The Lost Honour of Katherina Blum,* written to help reverse the erosion of civil liberties which was happening under the guise of anti-terrorist legislation. Staeck's poster showed a copy of the novel permanently closed with two large bolts, an image which touched old sensitivities about book-banning and book-burning in the Third Reich.

Two of his other montages typify his fear of government philistinism and repressive tendencies. One shows a volume of Heine's poetry marked with a Plimsoll Line disappearing beneath the waves with the caption: 'Freedom dies by centimetres.' The second purports to show a parliamentarian's personal reference library (Herr Saubermann's Handbibliothek): three packets of soap powder and a book of German law supported between two banal book-ends.

In Britain the photo-montagist Peter Kennard is moving in similar directions. Kennard has been producing powerful images since the late 1960s and his work has always been acknowledged by the art magazine world. From

'Constable's the Haywain and cruise missiles' by Peter Kennard.

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time to time he produced limited runs of street posters — 'cheap, they are about us in a cheap situation' — but for the most part preferred to provide montages for newspapers and magazines, particularly those on the left. A pre-occupation was the destruction and disfigurement of human bodies and human flesh by the hardware of military technology. He worked full time in 1973 as a montagist for the Socialist Labour League paper *Workers' Press*. Hard though it was for many to accept the paper's strident politics, there is no doubt that Kennard's design and imagery for the *Workers' Press* was far ahead of anything else left journalism and newspaper production has so far achieved.

With his contribution to the current touring exhibition 'No Nuclear Weapons' (in conjunction with photographer Mike Abrahams and text-writer Ric Sissons), Kennard has moved into a position of major importance. The montages he has produced for the anti-nuclear campaign are quite brilliant. His adaptation of Constable's 'The Haywain' from a rustic carrier of human livelihood into a mobile platform of 20th-century military technology, Cruise missiles, keyed in admirably with the 'State of the Nation' perorations of E. P. Thompson by which it was inspired. The juxtaposition of a national heritage icon with a contemporary image of technological annihilation is felt to be profoundly disturbing in the same way as Staeck's 'despoiling' of a sacrosanct Dürer icon.

Kennard's montage, 'Britain reduced to a Skeleton', in which a magnifying glass anatomises a map of Great Britain, is perhaps the most remarkable and effective he has produced.

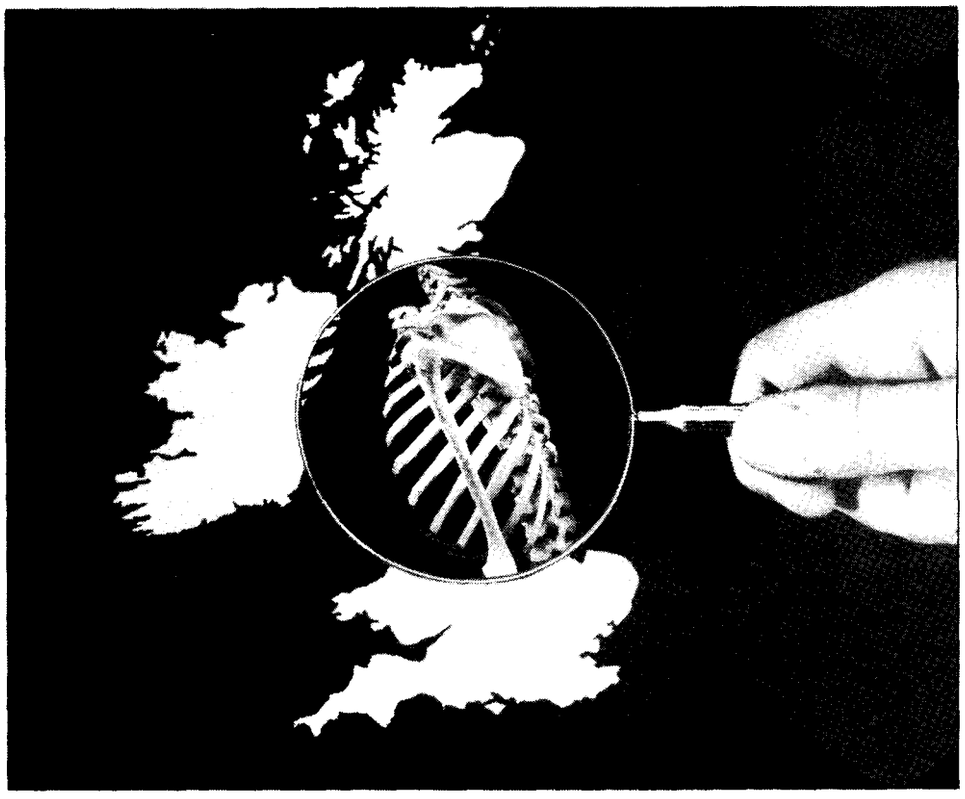
Anyone who has had the ambiguous privilege of seeing an X-Ray of their own skull or rib-cage — an unnerving premonitory glimpse of one's own final estate — will doubly appreciate why Kennard's image of Britain is so horrifying. It also produced, in shape and bone structure, the association of an extinct dinosaur, which has been a standard CND metaphor: 'Why did the dinosaur become extinct? Too much armour, too little brain!'

The 'Who Killed Blair Peach?' montage, also inspired by E. P. Thompson's deliberations, again uses the device of the magnifying glass to get beyond the surface appearance of things. In fact a magnifying glass is a working tool for a photographer who uses it to examine the finer details of a print, or check a sheet of contact prints. It is also used in classical detective fiction to look for the tiny detail which will disclose the larger truth.

In this case it is used to examine the special issue of police stamps last year — as a philatelist would use such a glass — to examine the authenticity of the image. What Kennard's glass reveals is much more disturbing: literally an unsolved murder.

Kennard recently told me how appropriate he felt montage was as a complement to Thompson's writing with its richness of allusion and ability to draw together an enormous number of separate discourses at particular historical moments.

Kennard too is now espousing the mass production media of printed posters and postcards and, like Staeck in Germany, giving the lie to that old, cynical adage which proclaims that 'art changes nothing'. For the function of street posters is to announce the event before it happens; the banners and emblems always fly at the head of a political movement.



'Britain reduced to a skeleton' by Peter Kennard.

The exhibition 'No Nuclear Weapons' is currently showing at the Side Gallery, Newcastle. During the first five months of 1981 it will be showing in Birmingham, Brighton, Nottingham, Liverpool and Exeter. For details contact Half Moon Photography Workshop, 119 Roman Road, London E2 (980-8798). A set of 6 photomontage postcards by Peter Kennard is available from Leeds Postcards, 13 Claremont Grove, Leeds 3, England (price 60p plus 15p postage). The Poster Shop, 1 Chalk Farm Road, London NW1, sells posters by John Heartfield, Peter Kennard and Klaus Staeck all at approx £1 each.

Advertisement

October 9, 1980

To people committed to social change and peace on earth:

I live in New Jersey, directly across the Hudson River from New York City. From Jersey the people in New York City seem to be intelligent, opinionated, and self-centered. Many display differences in parades on Fifth Avenue. Many are subjected to poverty and sickness by the capitalistic welfare state (welfare capitalism in action). Many punish themselves with alcohol and dope. Many are healthy.

In the United States, the media and the universities do not teach that war is morally wrong. The people of the United States tend to elect militarists to the U.S. Senate, though they cannot restrain them from declaring war. In March 1976, speaking on the propriety of the C.I.A. in letting out that the Israelis had the atom bomb, a resident of New York State, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, said, "I think it is a good thing to get out, lest no one have illusions about what could happen." The media and the universities, in the United States, do not disseminate the thought that a militaristic Israeli government would be resigned to the levelling of Haifa and Tel Aviv, by Arabs using nuclear weapons, within ten years of the levelling of Cairo and Damascus, by Israelis using nuclear weapons. In November 1976, the people of New York State elected Daniel Patrick Moynihan to the U.S. Senate.

From the friendly ultimatum of President Jimmy Carter, "Our friends will not send teams to the Moscow Olympics", and from the reaction to the friendly ultimatum by the governments of Japan, United Kingdom, and West Germany, the people of New York City deduce that there is no gentlemen's agreement between the militarists in the U.S.A. and the militarists in the U.S.S.R., in effect, the first strike of the U.S.S.R. will not be on the friends of the U.S.A. in Tokyo, London, and West Berlin; and the first strike of the U.S.A. will not be on the friends of the U.S.S.R. in Shanghai, Calcutta, and East Berlin.

Realizing that universal peace is their responsibility, the governments of the Third World and the Satellites of the superpowers try to construct a politico-economic system that the superpowers might emulate. The government tries to strike a balance between the rights of an individual and the rights of a democratic society. The government and local groups, to ensure a society with full, meaningful employment, control production and consumption, market and environment. The government teaches that it is morally wrong to violate the market or environment of any country. The government institutes a 20-hour week and achieves full, meaningful employment, after curtailing the production of non-essential items and cutting off military expenditures.

Love and Strength,

Grant McLaughlin
Hoboken, N.J.

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Blue guitar & bass saxophone

KEN WORPOLE calls jazz 'the dissident music of our century' and says jazz musicians 'do not play things as they are'.

EARLIER this year Camden Town Hall was packed to capacity to hear the black South African jazz pianist Abdullah Ibrahim (formerly Dollar Brand) give a solo concert. Described as a 'Freedom Concert', it had been organised by the African National Congress. The atmosphere that evening was electric, for only two days before Robert Mugabe had won his historic electoral victory in Zimbabwe. The majority of people in the audience were Africans in exile.

Politics and jazz are rarely so explicitly linked. Yet there always has been a relationship, which for many people in the post-war European left has been very important. The adoption of modern jazz happened for a number of reasons. Perhaps the most important was that this was one of the ways in which people could affirm political solidarity over and against the 'colour bar'. For jazz was seen very much as the creation of black Americans. That political choice can be seen most clearly by remembering how welcome black jazz musicians were made in a number of European countries (particularly Denmark and Sweden) in the 1950s, countries which many of them made their second home. There were technological reasons also, in that unbreakable vinyl records came on to the scene only in the late 1950s, at exactly the same time that CND and New Left politics were in the ascendancy. So the new politics needed a new, and associated, culture, which it found contemporaneously in the new wave European cinema and recorded American jazz.

One heard this new jazz by tuning to 'Voice of America' broadcasts, 'Jazz at Midnight', relayed from near Munich, interspersed with the occasional reminder that this music was coming courtesy of the 'Free World'. It came also in the form of accompanying soundtracks to French or Italian new wave films, as with the Modern Jazz Quartet score for the French film, *One Never Knows* (also known as 'No Sun in Venice'), or the Miles Davis soundtrack for Louis Malle's first film, *Lift to the Scaffold.* An American 'beat' play, *The Connection,* was quite a success in the West End: on stage a record player blared out Charlie Parker records as an accompaniment to the lives of the characters. *Jazz on a Summer's Day* was felt to be an important film in its own right, not simply a documentary record of one particular Newport Jazz Festival. The Marxist historian Eric Hobsbawm, who wrote regularly on jazz in the *New Statesman* under the pseudonym Francis Newton, argued that 'the blues are unquestionably the finest body of living folk poetry in the modern world'. Jazz was the music of political dissent.

Many classic/modern jazz recordings of the 1950s were not so much oppositional developments as re-constitutive of the mainstream popular music tradition. There are some lines from Wallace Stevens's poem, *The Man with the Blue Guitar,* which express the intentions of the jazz musician's re-working of popular

'standards': 'They said, "You have a blue guitar,/You do not play things as they are". The man replied, "Things as they are/Are changed upon the blue guitar".' For it was then quite common practice to use existing popular tunes as a basis for exploration and development. Jazz tried to re-vitalise and renew popular music, to cast the familiar in a new light. John Coltrane and Miles Davis re-arranged the Richard Rogers song-book. Pianists like Bill Evans and Dave Brubeck re-interpreted familiar Broadway show-stoppers and extended them into small masterpieces of architecture and tonal coloration.

The Gerry Mulligan Quartet's version of 'My Funny Valentine' was a significant contribution to the then current philosophy of existentialism: introspective, replete with melancholic angst. John Coltrane's 1960 version of the anodyne 'My Favourite Things' was to become the most notorious re-interpretation of a commercial song, and caused a musical furore. Coltrane literally took the tune to pieces and explored all the chordal possibilities opened up so that it could take literally half-an-hour to play. It was at this time that the long-playing record was able to offer the jazz musician the space to transfer live improvisations on to the permanent form of the record.

THERE ARE MANY ways in which jazz developed forms which seemed highly related to the politics of the post-war years, with the emphasis on self-realisation and identity. Jazz musicians are not limited to simply playing the notes written down by someone else — the unique composer. There is much more room for individual creativity. The most common mode of jazz playing is based on playing as an ensemble which at certain moments allows individual members time on their own to work out something new before returning to the ensemble again. It is usually the individual solo — or the 'chase' in which two soloists alternate in a spirited dialogue — which merits the greatest attention and sense of excitement. For the successful improvisation is a unique and unrepeatable thing. That is what is so poignant about listening to old recordings of live concerts, the sense of the absolute singularity of the occasion, the very deep cultural sense of 'moment'.

Players themselves know that there have been occasions when they have played at such an intensity and with such confidence and support that they have made discoveries which they might never be able to make again. The black writer Ralph Ellison once captured this bitter irony in the course of an article about guitarist Charlie Christian: 'Thus, because jazz finds its very life in an endless improvisation upon traditional materials the jazzman must lose his identity even as he finds it . . .' There is a teleology of jazz in its inherent and relentless desire to explore and extend the boundaries of musical (and hence human) form and experience.

It is no wonder then that it has often been called by the musicians themselves, 'Freedom music'. It is also not surprising that, when the black civil rights movement in the 1960s in the United States metamorphosed into the harder politics of black consciousness and black autonomy, American jazz went through one of its most energetic and experimental periods ever, with players like John and Alice Coltrane, Miles Davis, Archie Shepp and Albert Ayler and many others prolifically creating and improvising angry, searing music of enormous power and — at times — optimism. The relationship between musical and political change, so evident in black America in the 1960s, was noted as far back as Plato, who in *The Republic* observed that, 'Musical innovation is full of danger to the State, for when modes of music change, the laws of the State always change with them'.

At the same time as so much was happening in America, Abdullah Ibrahim, was beginning to produce the most extraordinary and cele-

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bratory jazz music of South African village and township life, music which is still largely unrecognised today although it has been argued that Ibrahim in other circumstances would have ranked with Ellington, Varese or Messiaen as a 20th-century giant. Ibrahim's most recent concert in London was, as already noted, alive with political excitement. Jazz, of course, has always been an offensive music to the ears of those with an eye to power who would rather people led quiet, orderly lives of consensus or meek subordination.

IN A RECENT ESSAY by the Czech writer, Josef Skvorecky, published as a foreword to his collection of novellas, *The Bass Saxophone,* he compares at length the attitudes of both the Nazi ideologists in occupied Czechoslovakia and the later Czech Communist apparatchiks to the jazz music loved by the young workers and students.

> For Goebbels, jazz was
> music that is based on rhythm and entirely ignores or even shows contempt for melody, music in which rhythm is indicated primarily by the ugly sounds of whining instruments insulting to the soul . . .

As such it was banned by the occupying Germans during the war. And then it was banned again after the war for different, but similar, reasons. This time, in the words of the leading Soviet musicologists, it was because jazz was 'invented by capitalists to deafen the ears of the Marshallised world by means of epileptic, loud-mouthed compositions'.

Skvorecky recalls the kind of instructions issued to dance bands during the war, regulating to a precise degree the tempi, instrumentation and lyrics of their repertoire. Saxophones were to be kept to a minimum, double basses were only to be bowed, drum breaks were not permitted, and as to the actual music itself, 'preference is to be given to compositions in a major key and to lyrics ex-

pressing joy in life rather than Jewishly gloomy lyrics'. And with regard to timing, then it was felt that

> the pace must not exceed a certain degree of allegro, commensurate with the Aryan sense of discipline and moderation. On no account will Negroid excesses in tempo (so-called hot jazz) or in solo performances (so-called breaks) be tolerated.

It is significant that the principal objections are to interferences in, or exaggerations of, timing, and to individual 'breaks'. For jazz is the enemy of 'measured' time, or undifferentiated 'time and motion'. Played through a muzak system to serried rows of hourly paid workers, jazz would disrupt production rather than encourage it. The brilliant recent Swedish jazz film, *Sven Klang's Combo,* portrayed the complexity of the relationship between the soloist and the ensemble, and the way in which commercial pressures often act to prevent improvisation and experimentation on grounds of not wanting to forfeit popularity. Notions of time and freedom are often co-terminous, as anybody will understand who has read *The Magic Mountain* or talked to people who have been in prison. One wonders how past and future orthodoxies would react to someone like the contemporary pianist Keith Jarrett, whose solo concerts are complete improvisations.

But jazz is not only a music of dissent. It also represents another kind of cultural tradition. For in the course of a mere 70 years — not a long time in the history of a cultural form — it has developed from being initially the self-realised and self-produced music of the poor, of highly marginal whites and blacks of the brothel district of New Orleans, to becoming the richest and most comprehensive musical culture of the 20th century. It has produced tens of thousands of self-educated virtuoso musicians, often from the most unlikely circumstances — such as cheap dance bands and brothel musicians — who have matched theoretically and technically the insights of the 20th-century avant-garde classical tradition. It has produced jazz orchestras whose complex scorings and instrumentation have equalled the subtleties of the impressionistic classical composers like Debussy and Ravel, and on the other hand there have been many individual jazz pianists who have discovered for themselves a range of piano techniques and forms of composition which matches those written by the most complex of classical composers for the piano. It has provided some of the best dance music, the most subtle film soundtracks, and shaped some of the best popular singers of the past 50 years. That is a substantial achievement. And it has done this while retaining generically a fierce independence. Jazz musicians have rarely made large amounts of money from their art, in comparison with musicians in other fields, for like the man with the blue guitar, they 'do not play things as they are'. Jazz is the dissident music of our century.

Mark Abley

'Look at this Persian Miniature'

Look at this Persian miniature:
a potter in a silver robe
whose hands rise up to smash
another bowl of failure.

The shards in front of his ankles
flow away, a jagged river
dammed by the silver frame
while his cloak, as though of clay,
mingles with the fragments of
a month at work.

Nothing he has fashioned is
worthy to remain
intact: only the artist,
exalted in destruction.

The beauty of these pots, he thinks,
had nothing in common
with the life that swirls around me,
patched and cracked and dirty.

They were not made to function,
merely to be admired.

I will ask the man who painted
this scene to chuck it out.

Wendy Cope

Depression

You lie, snail-like, on your stomach —
I dare not speak or touch,
Knowing too well the ways of our kind —
The retreat, the narrowing spiral.

We are both convinced it is impossible
To close the distance.
I can no more cross this room
Than Zeno's arrow.

Ron Butlin

Night-Life

My nerves stretched tight above the city
— a night-map of neon and sodium.

Hours earlier you wore darkness as love itself.
Moonlight you ground more finely with each kiss,
starlight you scattered out of reach.

And now, what burning inside me?
what light trapped in a clenched sky?

Peter Redgrove

The Primer

The Primer is sorrowless.
Patsy and John are always fine.
The Postman marches up the gravel path briskly.
He carries a party invitation. He is on time.

It is always fine in the Primer.
Patsy and John are sorrowless.
Breezes pull no mouths down in the tall elm trees,
Nor are these willows weepers.

Nannie wears her proud uniform, that is without smut
Rustling blue and white like the summer air;
Under sheer smile and sleeveless shirt
John's crotch is as uncomplicated as his Teddy Bear.

The Primer is a lie, in which only truth is told:
Bad boys in poor houses tell fibs and not John;
Patsy blubbers sometimes, just like a girl.
Mother is utterly sterling. Daddy never comes home.

It is always sunshine in the Primer,
Mother, Nanny, Patsy and John are sorrowless;
Daddy wrote the book, then closed it and will not return
Though paper eyes keep watch for him, fresh and furrowless.

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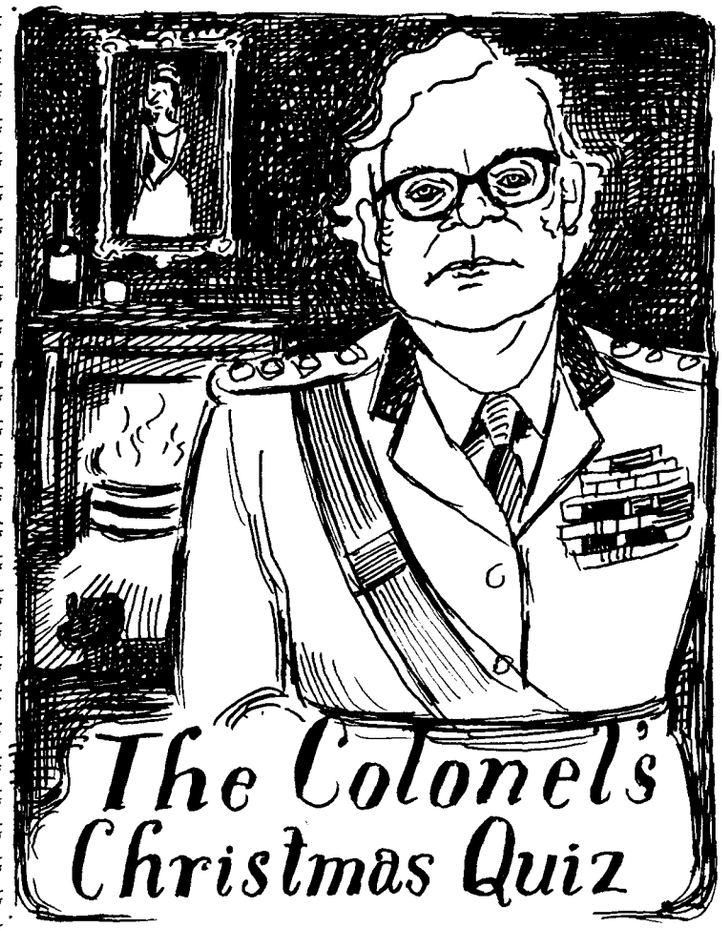

The Colonel's Christmas Quiz

Nothing but praise has been winging this away since I had my first shot at the quiz lark a year ago, and, with the festive season galloping towards us like a thoroughbred, I wasn't altogether surprised when the editor — didn't catch his name — told me to be on parade again. He seems a decent sort and although I gather the rag he runs is definitely sergeants' mess, you won't find me grousing: the payments are certainly a cut above Compo rations. So get cracking with the spit and polish and smarten yourselves up for inspection. Oh, and a spot of square bashing before we get on to the fancy stuff. What's the more common name for the Battle of Aboukir Bay? What brought a battle over a rattle to a sudden end? Who wrote the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*? At which battle were tanks first used? Who said 'probably the Battle of Waterloo *was* won on the playing-fields of Eton, but the opening battles of all subsequent wars have been lost there'? What did the Battle Act prohibit? Who wrote the Battle Symphony?

Spouting

In 1980, who said

1) 'If nominated I will run — to the Mexican border. If elected I will fight extradition'?
2) 'The presidential system just won't work any more. Anyone who gets in under it ought not to be allowed to serve'?
3) 'I like everything my beloved wife likes. If she wants to buy the top brick of St Paul's, then I would buy it'?
4) 'I knew from experience that a Force Eighter was on its way, and seeing for a change that I was not to be its victim, I hovered in the wings, pouring myself a sharpener in anticipation of a damn good show of fireworks'?
5) 'I first became an adultress to the sound of Mozart'?
6) 'It was the afternoon of my eighty-first birthday, and I was in bed with my catamite when Ali announced that the archbishop had come to see me'?

Wounding

Identify the authors and victims of the following:

1) Just for a handful of silver he left us,/Just for a riband to stick in his coat.
2) You yell for freedom
   But your voice rasps with future
   Prison doors closing.
3) Of praise a mere glutton, he swallow'd what came,/And the puff of a dunce he mistook it for fame.
4) I strove with all, for all were worth my strife./Nature I loathed, and, next to Nature, Art.
5) In controversial matters I display a certain latitude,/Except where the Establishment requires a kneeling attitude.
6) Dreading even fools, by flatterers besieg'd,/And so obliging that he ne'er oblig'd.

Eighty

This year:

1) Who got plastered after paying his debts of honour?
2) Who finished after starting over?
3) Why were keepers losers in Kent?
4) Why did Princess Margaret's blood cause an outcry?
5) How did Jimmy Carter unwillingly distance himself from Moscow?
6) Which heir took a nosedive?
7) Who missed his dubbing by dying in L.A.?

Beastly

Which creature

1) Packed her trunk and quit showbiz?
2) Found a messy way of cooling the blood?
3) Misunderstood an acorn?
4) Played the flute, and was given a baronetcy?
5) Chiefly needed a loaf of bread?
6) Protects its offspring from lightning?

Identify the authors of the following:

7) The manatee is harmless
   And conspicuously charmless.
   Luckily the manatee
   Is quite devoid of vanity.
8) I shoot the hippopotamus
   With bullets made of platinum,
   Because if I use leaden ones
   His hide is sure to flatten 'em.
9) He went out tiger hunting with his elephant and gun./In case of accidents he always took his mum.
10) For every family had one cat at least in the bag./For the English cats are the best in Europe.
11) What female heart can gold despise?
    What cat's averse to fish?
12) The man recovered of the bite,
    The dog it was that died.
13) Don't let's go to the dogs tonight,
    For mother will be there.

Who

1) promised to sserve the master — sss — of the preciouss?
2) was moithered in the fullness o'summer when the sukebind hung heavy from the wains?

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3) threatened to thcream and thcream until she was thick?

4) had a uniform jus lak a general and found Augusta lak that uniform?
5) was a horrible obscene irreligious Englishman and said of it *mi dispiace moltissimo*?
6) just gi'ed a sab and was by wi'it?
7) thought that Injun devil wouldn't make any more of drownding them than a couple of cats?
8) was trublit with great sicknes having been in heill and gladness?

The Proper Study of Mankind

1) Who first went to work by suspending the conscious will of others while they were still awake?
2) Who tried to study the contents of the mind via the contours of the head?
3) Who tried to study the components of the personality via the contours of the body?
4) Who sought to learn about human behaviour by training pigeons to play ping-pong?
5) Who sought to learn about human behaviour by inducing dogs to salivate?
6) Who first saw human intelligence as a testable, measurable commodity?
7) Who first saw human life as the working-out of a hierarchy of needs?
8) Who found the fact that his patients' stories of childhood sexual experience often turned out to be fantasy illuminating?
9) Who found birth order to be of some significance in explaining his patients' feelings of inferiority or superiority?
10) Who, notably, first treated the mentally ill as sick people in need of care rather than dangerous people in need of incarceration?
11) Who, notably, decided that there was no such thing as mental illness?

Organisational

For what could the following be said to be responsible:
1) Mary Baker Eddy?
2) Chad Varah?
3) Hugo of Payens?
4) St Clare?
5) John Venn?
6) George Fox?
7) Frederick Seebohm?
8) William Booth?
9) Peter Benenon?
10) Octavia Hill?
11) Josephine Butler?
12) The Revd. P.B. (Tubby) Clayton?
13) Robert Stephenson Smyth?

Nobly made

Who created
1) Lord Hippo?
2) Lord Arthur Savile?
3) Lady Cockpurse?
4) Lord Scradds?
5) Lord Merlin?
6) Lady Falkender?
7) Lady Bountiful?
8) Lord Fruitcake?

Where

1) were physical ailments punished as if they were crimes?

2) did Pishon, Gihon, Hiddebel and Euphrates rise?
3) did Ralph Hythloday find a new way of life?
4) did the Count begin his sanguinary work?
5) did a respectful silence fall at noon?
6) did Sparrowhawk exercise his wizardry?
7) was an Anatidaean potage brewed?
8) was mislaid by James Hilton?

In song

1) Which resident of Essex wasn't no blinking thicky?
2) Where could one find hearts as pure and fair as those in Seven Dials?
3) Where was it nicer, much nicer?
4) Where did all the flowers grow so very high?
5) Where, at raspberry time, did the undertaker clean his sign?
6) Where did the barber shave another customer?
7) Where were the residents famed for their walk?

In full

Supply the names behind the initials of
1) E. P. Thompson
2) Dorothy L. Sayers
3) Harry S Truman
4) R. D. Laing
5) J. R. Ewing
6) Arthur C. Clarke
7) H. E. Bates
8) V. S. Pritchett

What

1) was later known as hypnotism?
2) did an Austrian thinker warn men in particular to reckon with?
3) did St Ignatius Loyola, reputedly, call the deity?
4) did Max Fleischer do to Betty?
5) is the outcome of W. Indian Locust trees?
6) group announced a desire to get out of this place in 1965?
7) was nurtured by Tamora for Titus?
8) did EHC produce out of STC in 1895?

When

1) did an eleventh man outdo all other eleventh men?
2) did over-arm action get the seal of approval?
3) did it take only 95 to reach 174?
4) did a demon go into temporary retirement?
5) did 364 break something?
6) did Dolly first take the test?
7) did eight supercede six?
8) did success go the same way seven times in a row?

Which how

1) may transform your social life?
2) will teach you all about getting on at school?
3) enumerates the modes of affection?
4) was directed by three in three-lens cinerama?
5) is a metrical gallop?
6) was addressed to Mary?
7) did Gerry ask in song?
8) was demonstrated by Marilyn?
9) is answered by something airborne?
10) is for ever Wales?

Answers on p.55

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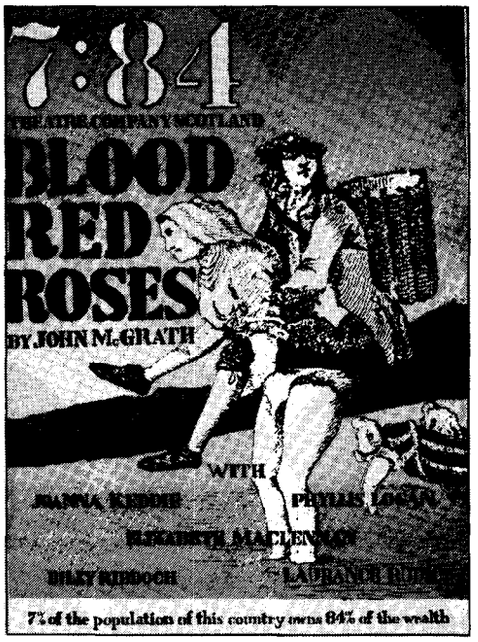
Political Theatre 1: On the road



THE 7:84 Company was so named to commemorate the fact that seven per cent of Britain's population owned 84 per cent of its wealth. Since 1973 there have been two 7:84 companies on tour, the Scottish and the English, keeping on the move to represent a socialist theatre to local audiences, to working people. There are no prescribed forms: realism, naturalism and the conventions of the 'well-made play' are used together with music and more experimental forms to suit the theme and, sometimes, the audience. The aim is not only to expose and instruct but — always — to entertain. Although 7:84 sometimes perform in conventional theatres the company more typically pitches its stage in a town hall, working men's club, pub or school.

COLIN MORTIMER has been following four 7:84 productions during the past year. His report follows.

THE 7:84 (ENGLAND) company toured *Sus* by Barrie Keeffe over a period of four months (61 performances, 38 of which were one-night stands) plus two weeks at the Edinburgh Festival. The total audience exceeded 10,000 and was varied: the West Indian Centre, Manchester; the teachers' centre, Harlow; the AUEW Club, Eccles; Aberdeen University. The play is about the arrest of a young black, Delroy, for, he believes, 'sus'. It is the night of the '79 election. Two policemen subject him to racist abuse and finally violence, as they swell with confidence at the news of Mrs Thatcher's victory.

'Oh, I wouldn't like to be a nigger in New England', says one of the policemen, Karn. 'Yesterday they voted for the price of bacon and a tanner off your tax . . . They never mentioned what was going to happen to the likes of dole scroungers like you.' The play links the brutal events we *see* and Tory aims and philosophy.

I saw *Sus* in March at the Trades Hall, Leeds; it was performed in a large room, dotted with low tables, clustered with people drinking. The bar at the back did not close. I read the leaflet thrust at me as I entered, about a demonstration. For this politically aware audience the play illustrated and crystallised a problem they knew about, but in the abstract. The majority was white. There was no interval. The tension mounts steadily and, with it, anger.

> *Karn:* Thatch will be in government in 1984. There's a thought. Are you a political man, Mr Delroy?
> *Delroy:* Yesterday, I'd have said no. Today . . . it begins.

Near the front, a black man, leaning forward, mutters agreement.

Early in May, we were in the St Paul's district of Bristol a month after the riots. The Inworks is a small community centre housed in a stone-built terrace in a small residential side street. *Sus* was played in a room a little bigger than those front living rooms in Coronation Street. The play was working well but not gripping its audience in the same way it had when staged at the *Half Moon*. Why? Some of the younger black girls down the front seemed offended by the foul language of the play. When I spoke to members of the audience afterwards their reserve became a little clearer. They were pleased that 7:84 were doing the play which showed what *did* happen, but 'It's old fashioned'. 'We know all this. The situation was bad under Labour, too.'

The play on tour added weight to the campaign — apparently successful — to abolish the 'sus' law; it was also used in Scotland as part of another campaign, to prevent the passing of the Scottish Criminal Justice Bill.

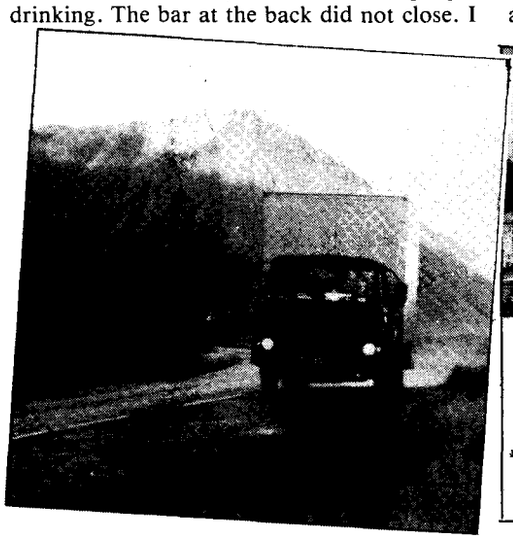
SWINGS AND ROUNDABOUTS, by John McGrath, was toured by 7:84 (Scotland) during February and March, including a week at the Citizens' Theatre, Glasgow. This play visited many more theatres and arts centres than did *Sus* in England. While this obviously reflects both the general political difference between the two countries and the different status of 7:84 in Scotland, McGrath has also written a play constructed to entice, to widen the audience. Two sets of newlyweds — one bridegroom, Andy, is an installer of TVs with a very ambitious bride; the other, Freddie, is an upper-class management consultant — are thrown together at the dreadful Neptune's Fork Honeymoon Hotel in Falkirk. The audience is familiar with the form. It's like a Jimmy Logan situation comedy, but with a twist.

The first act exploits the absurdities of class and class assumptions. The second begins to expose the political and economic realities which lie behind the stage action.

> *Freddie:* All these lower class oiks have bullied their employers into handing over more and more cash — now they want something to spend it on: . . . So what do we sell them? Pre-packed lifestyle, off the peg. Crap food, crap clothing, crap music, crap furniture, crap houses, crap hotel, — all at great expense: and they consume it all, and go on strike for more. Pathetic.

Real people begin to emerge from the stock characters. The shy and bumbling Andy reveals a streak of determination and an acute understanding of Freddie's morality: 'It's more important to you to be successful than to be just or even to be human.' Using the fun of the original form the play leads us away from familiar stereotypes which suggest that class differences are inherent, unchangeable and normal, showing that they represent individual suffering and exploitation.

Of the four plays I discuss here, John McGrath's *Blood Red Roses* is the most complex. It relates the private world of its characters to public and political events set against a



The 7:84 van under the Cullins on the Isle of Skye.

Members of company and audience help out at Anstruther. Photo by John Mackay.

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Elizabeth MacLennan (left) as Bessie Gordon and Phyllis Logan as Catriona in Blood Red Roses.

background of 20 years of industrial decline. All this is done in a style which is entertaining and accessible to widely differing audiences. The play is about Bessie Gordon who comes from 'a long line of Celtic fighting women'. She fights against the sexism of her schooling and unhealthy conditions in her factory — with her fists. She marries the shop steward and gradually learns how to channel her fighting spirit till she takes on the multi-national which has bought up her firm, and, by co-ordinating fellow workers all over Europe, beats it.

However, the multi-national closes the firm, her husband leaves her, and to cap it all the Tories win the '79 election. But her spirit is as strong as ever and the play ends on a note of affirmation not despair. Though the play's style is direct and its political position is clear, what it provides is not propaganda, because it explores and questions, asserting its values and ideas rather than a particular political doctrine. Bessie's father, an old soldier, articulates the main theme of the play:

> *Sandy:* To my way of thinking, there's two purposes in living, there's enjoyment like reading or playing with the grandchildren or growing scarlet runners, that's one, but there's no flavour to that, no value in it, without the other: and that's fighting — struggles. Either one without the other is foolish: but together they are the reasons for carrying on.

Constantly, *Blood Red Roses* examines the problems and contradictions at the point where political involvement and personal life touch and collide. There's a scene in which, with the washing piled to the ceiling, her two daughters squabbling, and her husband hidden behind a paper, Bessie tries to take a phone call from a call box in Lisbon where (it's 1971) a Portuguese trade unionist is risking his life to speak to her. Later, just before he deserts Bessie, Alex comments:

> I try to change myself, and to see politics reaching into all areas of my life . . . but there seems to be an old-fashioned need for the wife to look after the weans. Till after the revolution. I'm trying to be honest and that's how I think it is.

BLOOD RED ROSES was toured by the Scottish 7:84 company in the Highlands. It is here that you get the clearest idea about the way in which a popular socialist theatre can become the norm, not the alternative, but *the* theatre. The audiences were patently not packed with convinced socialists. In Scotland, even Tories go to see 7:84. At Thurso 300 people or more crammed into a room in the Town Hall, standing room only. The show crammed on to the stage. The same mixed audience as before, plus lots of children. Enormous enthusiasm and enjoyment. At Rogart, a small village, over 200 people packed into the village hall, resembling an overlarge garden shed. During the interval the lighting man stood on a chair to feed 10p coins into a slot meter. After the show there was a dance to raise money for the village hall with lots of hard drinking, eager discussion and frantic dancing. Everything had to stop by midnight; tomorrow was Sunday. 'Too red.' 'More about city life than here.' 'Not as good as the *Cheviot*' — such were the comments to the actors and actresses between hectic dances. And, paradoxically, it was the criticisms from people who will come to the next show and the one after that which convinced me of the strength of 7:84's bond with its audience rather than the conventional praise — 'marvellous', 'very funny, moving, enjoyable' — of which there was plenty, too. This bond, expressed more politically, was just as strong at the Star Club in Glasgow, where the audience of activists might have come straight out of the story told on stage. In Rogart the audience was entertained, educated, provoked; in the Star Club, encouraged and re-inforced; at the Scottish TUC Women's Conference in Stirling, full of women like Bessie, celebrated.

It would be hard to imagine anything more different from *Sus* than *One Big Blow* by John Burrows, produced by the English 7:84 and touring as I write. Naturalistic set, props and tour-de-force are replaced by mime, ingenuity and fun. In a British coalfield 'situated on the borders of Wales, Kent and Northumberland — where they meet', the day shift on number 2, all members of the colliery brass band, come out on strike when the effect of the dust they work in all the time is suddenly brought home to them; their star cornet player has developed pneumoconiosis. Two stories unfold. First, how the strike is resolved. Do they win their demands for a new cutter which will cost £50,000 and what happens when Sir Derek Ezra visits the pit? Secondly, how they find a new cornet player, and do they win the brass band competition in Blackpool?

One Big Blow shows us that the National Coal Board expresses its concern for the health of miners in pounds and pence, but it is not an attacking play. 'Baddies' aren't savaged so much as scooped up and gently prodded into revealing their absurdities, greed, pettiness; but so are the 'goodies'. As a piece of hard-nosed political analysis or exposé it is nowhere. But as a piece of popular socialist theatre, as a balance in the repertoire to *Sus*, it's ideal. I saw it at a Technical College in Solihull which has hosted many 7:84 productions. The young audience was enchanted. I had thought that this form of socialist theatre was unknown to the London critics because it mainly takes place outside London. But when *One Big Blow* did play at the Half Moon it was ignored by nearly all of them. Still, they have another chance: it will be back at the Half Moon in January.

2: Weapons of happiness

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE reviews three books which explore the vagaries of politically committed theatre in Britain.

HOWARD BRENTON has been criticised by some of his *confrères* on the left for writing at all for a National Theatre they regard as a vast concrete-gothic keep occupied by their social and cultural enemies. John McGrath, for instance, sees it and other major subsidised playhouses as analagous to our nationalised industries ('capitalist structures, but without the need to make profits') and has elected to take his crusading 7:84 Company to the places where ordinary people actually live, work, and try to enjoy themselves ('better a bad night in Bootle than a good on the South Bank'). Brenton's answer, so Catherine Itzin tells us, is that the National is wealthy enough to stage a play which 'describes whole countries, whole classes, centuries' and big and influential enough for 'large numbers of people to see it, and for it to reverberate, for it to be discussed, for it to be a national event, for it to be news'. Hence his *Weapons of Happiness* in 1977. And hence, now, his *Romans in Britain*.

Well, *The Romans* is news, but not the kind

Stages in the Revolution by CATHERINE ITZIN *Methuen* £4.50

Dreams and Deconstructions edited by Sandy Craig *Amber Lane Press* £7.95

Strike While the Iron is Hot: 3 plays on sexual politics edited by Michelene Wandor *Journeyman* £2.95

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of news Brenton can have wanted. The hoped-for political debate has degenerated into the old, enervating wrangle about the boundaries of middle-class taste, complete with dry little letters in *The Times* about the provenance of the word 'obscene'.

Is it worth persevering at all with what Ms Itzin calls 'political theatre' and defines, perhaps presumptuously, as work that helps 'the struggle towards a socialist society — a contribution to a revolutionary process'?

That's a question others must be asking themselves, too. In 1968 there were just six 'fringe' companies, only one of which was strongly socialist in commitment; in 1978 there were well over 100, including 18 full-time subsidised socialist theatre groups and perhaps as many (claims Ms Itzin) 'unsubsidised groups who propagated revolutionary socialist ideas'. Informative accounts of CAST, Belt and Braces, Red Ladder (see particularly *Strike While the Iron is Hot)* and others are to be found in *Stages in the Revolution.* So are interesting essays on Brenton, Hare, Griffiths and other radical playwrights who emerged during that decade. So much energy and effort, and, it sometimes seems, less than nothing to show for it. Here we are in a Britain, not merely as economically and socially unjust as it was 12 years ago, but actually being busily forced backwards by as reactionary a government as the most paranoid pensmith can have dreamed of. To riposte with *The Romans in Britain* or an anti-Thatcher cartoon like *A Short Sharp Shock* is, on the face of it, akin to blowing raspberries at a Centurion tank.

In *Dreams and Deconstructions,* an admirable collection of essays on 'alternative theatre', Sandy Craig makes a necessary distinction between 'political drama' and 'political theatre'. Political drama, he suggests, seeks to appeal to and influence the middle class, especially that section which can alter public opinion; political theatre, to appeal to and express the aspirations of the working class. This is, of course, something of a simplification, especially when Craig comes to his corollary, according to which political drama, unlike political theatre, is reformist rather than authentically radical. Edward Bond would certainly not see his function that way, even though his audiences are still mainly middle class. Indeed, his recent work has come close to advocating the overthrow of society by violent means. Again, Trevor Griffiths has managed to find a substantially working-class audience for some of his more subversive plays, simply because he writes for TV. Conversely, not all political theatre groups assume that, in Craig's words, 'the working class is the progressive class within society'. Yet the generalisation is worth bearing in mind, as a partial truth and helpful guide.

The achievement, actual and potential, of 'political drama' is especially hard to establish, since both its subject-matter and its audiences tend to be less specific than those of 'political theatre', which commonly addresses itself to the woes of particular people in a particular place. According to Bond, its insights 'can function like the polio vaccine or the Pill, gradually, radically, materially changing the nature of society . . . disturbing society in such a way that its institutions lose their grip'. According to David Edgar, it can help simply by explaining the workings of a public world that has become 'increasingly difficult and complex, obscure and influential'. According to Barrie Keeffe, who admits that 'the people I'm writing about, writing for, wouldn't be seen dead in a theatre', it can still usefully 'contaminate' audiences with the anger of the abused and oppressed. Certainly, it's hard to believe than anyone left Keeffe's *Gotcha,* Edgar's *Destiny,* or Bond's *Saved* as comfortably as he went in. The least that can be claimed for the best of 'political drama' is that it has made many intelligent people more sceptical, self-questioning and restless: it has added, if only marginally, to the demoralisation of much of the middle class, its disbelief in itself. And that may not be so negative an achievement as it sounds.

POLITICAL THEATRE obviously tends to have more positive aims, though the groups concerned are so many, diverse and (sometimes) geographically remote that it's difficult to generalise about their success, either. Little can have been achieved by such as Broadside Mobile Workers' *Divide and Rule Britannia,* in which a cartoon Sir Jack Boot and his parliamentary ally Kid Glove set honest workers at each others' throats, using racial tensions to smash their strike; rather more, surely, by 7:84's *Cheviot, Stag and Black, Black Oil,* which revealed to the local populace some well-kept secrets about who owned what in the Highlands. 'Political theatre', at worst, consists of crude and condescending exercises in 'consciousness-raising', directed by privileged know-it-alls at people who know their capitalism at first hand: it can also cock amusing and morale-boosting snooks, tell entertaining and enlightening stories, inform and perhaps analyse. However, both Itzin and Craig come up with the identical case when they seek to prove the direct influence of radical theatre on current events, and it isn't an altogether impressive one, the Half Moon's *George Davis Is Innocent — OK?* Depressing to have 'assisted in achieving the release' of a wrongly imprisoned man, only to see him justly convicted of armed robbery two years later.

Still, it may be significant that this feat, such as it was, was achieved, not by a touring theatre company, but by one which had ensconced itself in a particular area and tried to become an essential part of it. All of these books have much to say about 'community theatre', that's to say a theatre which consists, not of material fed *de haut en bas,* but of actors who dedicate themselves to the problems and pains of a specific place and conversely, of citizens who participate in the creation of an authentically local drama. The pioneer here is Ed Berman, who began with a theatre group and has ended by inspiring a series of 'city farms' and a large and variegated community centre in Chalk Farm, among other enterprises. The achievements aren't always so concrete, let alone impressive; but several groups do appear to have played a modest part in galvanising the underprivileged and passive, or at least in making them more aware of the inadequacies of their environment.

Ms Itzin too often keeps her obvious intelligence under wraps. That's to say, she lets her subjects present their own cases, and so gives the impression of accepting them on their own valuation of themselves, however different their views of the function of political theatre. She is far too uncritical of her allies: for instance, the Ardens. It defeats me how anyone can contentedly watch the author of *Armstrong's Last Goodnight,* as trenchant a study of politics in action as I've seen in a playhouse, conscientiously diminish himself into that of *The Non-Stop Connolly Cycle,* whether or not the former was presented by the National and the latter performed at Liberty Hall, Dublin. In fact, Ms Itzin enthusiastically applauds his self-mutilation, as in this mood she would have applauded Shakespeare, had he abandoned the drama after *Lear,* organised a radical group called Stratford Sock-It, and toured the nation with a series of cartoon-satires directed against the Jacobean merchant-classes. If 'political theatre' had visibly achieved more than 'political drama', John Arden might have been right to have renounced the form at which he was supremely good for the one in which he's just another journeyman; but the evidence of Ms Itzin's own book is that this isn't the case. Judged by short-term criteria, both have mainly failed; judged by long-term ones, both may succeed. The moral is simple: that each and everyone should persevere, in spite of setbacks, in the vineyard for which his or her talent is best equipped.

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Fiction — 1

James Campbell

Black Hope

The Emigrants and **Season of Adventure** by GEORGE LAMMING *Allison & Busby* £6.50 & £2.95 each

Voyovic and other stories by NIALL QUINN *Wolfhound* £5.95

For a time George Lamming was the Great Black Hope of the novel in English. His first novel, *In the Castle of My Skin* (1953), was acclaimed on both sides of the Atlantic, and Lamming kept up his success with four more books by the end of the decade. When he rebuked Naipaul in 1960 for being ashamed of his cultural background and for striving towards 'the peaks of a "superior" culture whose values are gravely in doubt', Lamming's reputation was the greater of the two. Unfortunately, his ascendancy was not maintained; indeed, there has been no new novel by him for eight years. Now that his books are being reissued, readers can judge for themselves the early promise and what the praise it gained was worth.

The Emigrants, Lamming's second novel, charts the voyage of a group of men and women on their way from the West Indies to England and their progress thereafter. Being cut off from one country and not yet (if they ever will be) a part of another, the characters in *The Emigrants* are at the mercy of a constantly shifting sense of their own identities. They become incapable of promise or trust; some of them assume false names; for one couple the grotesque disaster of a past romance is repeated while each is under the illusion that he is courting someone new. Lamming is speaking for the generation of colonials to whom England seemed not just a place, 'but a heritage'. It is not simply a novel of disillusionment, however, for as well as being the victims of historical processes which they only begin to understand, the emigrants are also the agents of them. Their instinct is towards an adult sense of themselves. To what extent is that instinct deniable? The question is a real one for it is the wish of the parent country that they should remain children.

The first 100 pages of *The Emigrants* are superb: Lamming's prose has real authority and, as you read, a promise which is held tantalisingly in abeyance, so that the meaning at one moment seems obscure and at the next to be bursting out all over. His writing is dense and occasionally suffocating, but when applied to things, rather than abstractions, is strong and sure of itself. Narrative and plot are not his natural gifts — there is usually a discomfiting whiff of allegory in the air — and *The Emigrants* eventually suffers from clumsy structuring and a blurred focus. But as an artistic account of the pained responses of a group of pioneers who are now a part of history (indeed, two separate histories) it contains many excellent sections.

Season of Adventure, first published in 1960, in a sense dramatises the 'home' aspect of the same conflict; in this case Lamming's concern is with the Caribbean culture invaded by European values. Once again, the opening pages are marvellous. They describe a ceremony of the souls at which the dead are expected to be raised, presided over by the *Houngan*, a kind of witch doctor, and carried out to the unrelenting accompaniment of steel drums. The main character, Fola, a light-skinned middle-class girl, is there in the capacity of an observer. Gradually, though, she is drawn into a deeper past through the search for her father and it is she who is caught in the crossfire of a struggle between people who have 'pawned their future to possessions' and those 'condemned by lack of learning to a deeper truth'. The music of the drums is there throughout the novel, 'loud as gospel to a believer's ears', and at the end it stands alone as witness to the tradition which is all the peasants have to guard themselves against a future sold off without their consultation.

Like *The Emigrants*, this novel leaves the reader feeling that talent and vision have not been organised in their own — not to mention the reader's — best interests. Lamming's technique of relating an incident back to front and his infinite probing of characters' fears, attitudes and echoes from their pasts, combine to create a foggy atmosphere.

In his occasionally brilliant and often garrulous book of essays, *The Pleasures of Exile*, Lamming made a plea for the West Indian to be spared the 'torture of adult indifference': the fate of the Invisible Man. The most widely read black novelists have understood, perhaps, that in the face of a readership which is largely indifferent to him, the black writer must outwit his white audience by seeming to play into their hands. Clearly a man of very determined will, Lamming has never sufficiently conceded this point. He claims at one moment to be addressing a West Indian audience, and at the next to 'have had it where the British Caribbean is concerned'. Anyway, he has as much to offer the people of the country where he lives as he does those of the place where he comes from, and I for one hope that his exile from the written word will not last much longer.

Niall Quinn is an exile too, although of a very different kind. An Irishman, he has served in the merchant navies of several nations, and his first book of stories has various settings. There is a touch of self-romanticising in some of the stories, but in the two best ones, 'Fixing' and 'Fates', Mr Quinn avoids the obvious pitfalls of a writer tackling drug addiction and the seduction of a young man by an older woman in Paris. The latter story in particular strikes the hard-driven nail of loneliness on the head. Mr Quinn has, as they say, 'been there'.

Fiction — 2

James Lasdun

Sunlight & Chaos

Black Sunlight by DAMBUDZO MARECHERA *Heinemann* £2.60

Flowers and Shadows by BEN OKRI *Longman* £1.25

'Hold back the edges of your gowns, ladies, we are going through hell.' Thus wrote William Carlos Williams introducing Ginsberg's 'Howl' in 1956, and it would serve equally well as an introduction to *Black Sunlight*. Here, the barely contained anger of *The House of Hunger*, with which Marechera made his impressive début and won the *Guardian* fiction prize for 1979, has been fully unleashed. The result is a work that falls between fiction and chaos.

Any account of the 'story' must be offered tentatively, for this is not a book that lets you know step by step where it is taking you. The narrator is a photographer in what was Rhodesia, who moves from chronicling the racial violence of his country, to helping create that violence. A girl he rescues from a battle between students and police takes him to a group of terrorists called the 'Black Sunlight Organisation' based in a complex of caves. Here he enters a fantastic world peopled by

Richard Haver

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beings both imaginary and real, ranging from a prisoner 'hung upside down and dangled by his testicles' to his own doppelganger who spouts a frenzied revolutionary philosophy built on a desire to 'transform the nature of available reality'. To this effect, they plant a bomb in a cathedral, and the explosion is mirrored in the disintegration of the book into fragmented descriptions of carnage, orgies, dead friends, and a final, brilliant, invocation of writers as disparate as Horace and Marinetti, whose works have informed both the vision and the technique of *Black Sunlight* itself.

Personal breakdown is the theme as much as political breakdown — indeed the two are inseparable. And Marechera makes ambitious use of many of the methods that one associates with 'experimental' fiction to present this sense of complete collapse. There are abrupt shifts of time and place, streams — or rather torrents — of consciousness, and verbal extravagance, all drafted to the service of an attitude that insists upon depredation as the present norm of human existence.

In a writer of modest talents, this would be a recipe for disaster. Marechera's talents are not modest, and his conviction that 'to write as though one kind of reality subsists in the world is to act out a mentally retarded mime for a mentally deficient audience' clearly results from the quality of his own perceptions, rather than from a self-conscious 'thinking about the novel'. His refractions of reality certainly yield some fascinating results, particularly in the way they allow Marechera continually to subvert some of his characters' more banal pronouncements, such as 'thinking gets in the way of living', so that the banality itself becomes the point of focus.

But despite this, and despite the caustic humour that makes even the most torrid passages readable, *Black Sunlight* is too flawed to be judged, in literary terms, as anything but an heroic failure. At one point the photographer says 'I closed my mouth tightly like a man who has too much to say'. Marechera also seems to have too much to say for the space he has given himself, and has produced a book in which too many elements are too insufficiently absorbed to seem anything but fleeting fancies. It is this failure of control that limits what had the makings of an extraordinary piece of fiction, to a disturbing, but ultimately formless, document of personal anguish.

Ben Okri's *Flowers and Shadows* is, in comparison, a very conventional novel. Its publishers inform us that Okri was 19 when he wrote it — if this is a plea for clemency, it is quite unnecessary, for the level of accomplishment would do credit to many writers of greater experience. Okri's strong grasp of moral issues enables him to develop his story of an idealistic young man brought close to tragedy by the exploits of his unscrupulous father — a 'business warrior' — into a clearly stated, and perceptive account of how wealth feeds on poverty, and in the end breeds nothing but squalor. As one would expect in a first novel, Okri's abilities are not always equal to the task he sets himself, and where they fail, he resorts to cliché. This is especially true of the more introspective passages, where phrases like 'the emptiness he felt threatened to swallow him' considerably mar the quality of the writing. But the strengths of the book — its moral conviction, and the carefully observed descriptions of the business world of Nigeria — are evidence of a genuine talent.

Race, sex & class in children's books: 6

Dragon's teeth

In the final article of the series RICK ROGERS surveys the literary and critical battlefield surrounding children and the books they read.

Milton understood:

> Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are . . . they are as lively, and as vigorously productive as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men.

Yet if the Children's Rights Workshop (CRW) is right, those armed men (and women) remain largely sexist, racist and class-ridden. Well, are they? And what's to be done?

There is no doubt that CRW with its *Children's Books Bulletin* and annual Other Awards — along with CISSY, NAME and the National Committee on Racism in Children's Books — *has* had a significant if patchy effect on writers, producers and purchasers of children's books. Without them, many publishers admit they would still be pursuing 'our lazy and ignorant ways'. They readily, if conveniently, apologise for bias on grounds of carelessness, poor translations, pressure of time. More Black writers are being published, rather than Whites reporting, often none too accurately, the Black experience.

Yet there remains an uncomfortable, and dangerous, gulf between the two sides. What angers CRW is the unwillingness of many 'established' publishers and critics to accept guidelines to ensure that bias turns up in print less often. What disturbs many publishers and critics is the 'threat of censorship' in meddling with the content of books. CRW also wants to alter the nature of reviewing books, wishing to extend 'the parameters of the critical debate around children's books . . . to include consideration of content as well as aesthetics'. Critics such as John Rowe Townsend and *The Times*'s Brian Alderson reject this as too crude an approach, opening the way to 'a jumble of criteria, a haphazard mixture of personal responses'. Reviewing, they believe, should be based on gauging literary merit and not so much on suitability, popularity or relevance. It is both a literary and an ideological dispute.

Setting up 'official' guidelines will, it is argued, merely allow for the exchange of one bias for another — or, worse, of bias for blandness; in effect, replace, say, a sexist stereotype with a non-sexist one. (Janet and John re-emerge as born-again stereotypes.) Behind this assertion is a more substantial and in some cases sectional fear that the proffered guidelines mean an abandonment of literary criteria — a way in for third-rate writers to dominate a stifled book market.

There is certainly an assumption that books singled out as non-biased are somehow less good *per se* because they are supposedly contrived. Thus, the current trickle will become a stream of formula or cloned books — unlike, of course, the variety in the creative output of the likes, say, of Blyton or Garner. There may also be a return to the early Victorian view of children's books (never quite lost) that they should 'preach, exhort, teach and reprimand' — back indeed to trading biases.

The books chosen for the Other Award commendations give the lie to such assumptions — *on the whole.* Certainly, the rhetoric from the small groups that gather under the umbrella of Librarians for Social Change ('fighting the isms' — just a few of them) raises the tempo of the debate and has Bernard Levin crawling up the walls of his *Times* column. They argue not just for greater 'balance' and 'relevance' in libraries according to local conditions, but a straightforward shift in the power to control what goes on library shelves: 'the librarian's role as a positive force in the process of social change. It is an ever-widening field of activity and no place for mere bookish theories.' Alas, too easily LfSC slips into the wish to provide only what they think is 'good' for readers rather than what readers actually want to read. Yet, they have, of course, located a key area — and a legitimate one — for effecting a wider awareness of bias.

There is, however, a more fundamental problem. No agreement exists between or even within the two sides on how you define 'racism' or 'sexism' — let alone deal with it. Beyond the glaringly obvious, there is an evident difficulty in establishing a formula. Take Paula Fox's *The Slave Dancer* (Macmillan 1974, Piccolo 1977). For CRW it presents severe problems and has been condemned for its allegedly racist content — see Jill Paton Walsh's article, *NS* 28 November. But Bob Dixon in his pioneering survey of bias in children's literature, *Catching Them Young,* says: 'It approaches perfection as a work of art.' Bob Jeffcoate, author of *Positive Image: Towards a Multiracial Curriculum* and a member of the Schools Council multi-racial education project (banned in 1978 because it highlighted racism among teachers) regards it as 'a noble book, finely written, exciting and harrowing'.

Yet as a teacher he faced some incidence of 'black rejection' of *The Slave Dancer* because of its theme and of a failure by students to consider, or even read, the book as a whole. Should he then use it — and recommend it? Why not, since he finds it an anti-racist book? Incidentally, it didn't get a Piccolo reprint 'because it wasn't worth it commercially'.

In contrast, CRW finds Basil Davidson's history textbook — an Other Award winner — *Discovering Africa's Past* 'stimulating', giving 'proper and dispassionate attention to the realities of slavery and of colonial expansion'. But Jeffcoate sees it as 'almost as biased' as any pro-colonial text — this time in excusing *African* atrocities rather than British — and 'something pupils need to be fortified against'.

On another level, the Pippi Longstocking books are viewed by some as sexist, but by others — equally committed to feminism — as anti-sexist. CRW criticises them for being 'a hymn to colonialist attitudes'.

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Who then is to judge for the purposes of a set of guidelines? I am not sneering at the contradictions nor claiming the basic argument to be insubstantial, rather that guidelines are not the effective deterrent many think them to be — merely a frame of reference within which differences can be articulated.

What *is* damaging for the social critics is the tendency to organise 'bias-hunts' along Mary Whitehouse and Mrs Grundy lines and thereby fall into what Jeffcoate has described as the 'simple-minded nonsense [that] critiques of "racist" literature so often degenerate into'. Why bother, for example, to hammer three short (and in this context) innocuous sentences in Janice Elliott's *The Birthday Unicorn* (Puffin 1973) as 'blatant racist bias'? The sentences denounced by CRW describe part of an explorer's experiences:

> When Alexander was five Mr Banyana was fighting off desperate warring Kurdish tribesmen single-handed. When his son was six, he was discovering a previously unknown and extremely fierce blood-sucking horse fly in a filthy malarial swamp somewhere off the Nile.

A later sentence has Mr Banyana 'in a jungle clearing among hostile natives'. And that's it. Does this really compare with the hard-core racist elements in, say, *Doctor Dolittle* with its stereotyped illustrations, a plot that has a black prince wanting a white skin and the line 'You must turn this coon white'?

And this is where the 'censorship' issue takes off. If Dolittle — or Biggles, Pippi, Noddy and Little Black Sambo — are unambiguously racist, do we ban them from multi-ethnic Britain? Do we rewrite them — as Roald Dahl did with *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (to applause from established critic Rowe Townsend)? Do we 'consign them to oblivion' as one critic suggests; if so, how?

A nervy Society of Authors opposes guidelines as a trojan horse full of censors: they 'threaten to limit the variety of views of the world which can be expressed in books for the young'. In turn, CRW labels the whole business of producing books as an extended act of censorship. Maybe so, but neither response gets us anywhere in agreeing terms for handling bias. 'Censorship' is used as a catch-all, short-circuiting the whole argument rather than getting to grips with it.

Referring to guidelines that aim, for example, to avoid male bias or thoughtless prejudice is, largely, commonsense — footholds on the long climb to sexual and racial equality. But do those now on offer present the most effective way of increasing readable quality-books for a multi-ethnic, equal-opportunitied (sic) society? Will they pull down the shutters — or have they been down for years?

Content — and that is what guidelines are really on about — does not exclusively or automatically make a book 'good' or 'bad' merely 'approved' or not. Any book — approved or otherwise — can be bad if it is boring — unread and unreadable. And boredom can kill off a book faster than any form of censorship. Ten years ago, Augusta Baker, co-ordinator of children's services for New York Public Library, put it this way: 'We need to respect the right of children to have good books and not to have quite so many . . . contrived books. They won't read badly written contrived books.'

But, by now, the 'debate' has gone way beyond definitions of racism and sexism. It has become the current flashpoint in British literature — an internecine politico-literary war. According to the social critics, the caucus inside the Society of Authors have held sway in writing and criticism for too long. Now it's someone else's turn: that bunch 'are well down river'. A new deal in children's books is on the way.

Yet behind the rhetoric, invective and panic, there remains the straightforward fact that books for children (*all* such books?) should reflect the realities (what is or what should be?) of living in late 20th-century Britain and the present obligations of a colonial past. We cannot have it both ways — excuse racist and sexist classics for being of their own time but reject the need for awareness, accuracy and relevance in contemporary books.

Can it be done without a terminal blow to the heart of the art? And which side is most like to strike such a blow? Somewhere among the 'jackboot critics', the 'Marie Antoinettes' and the 'running dogs' of an increasingly abusive children's books world there may be a way through.

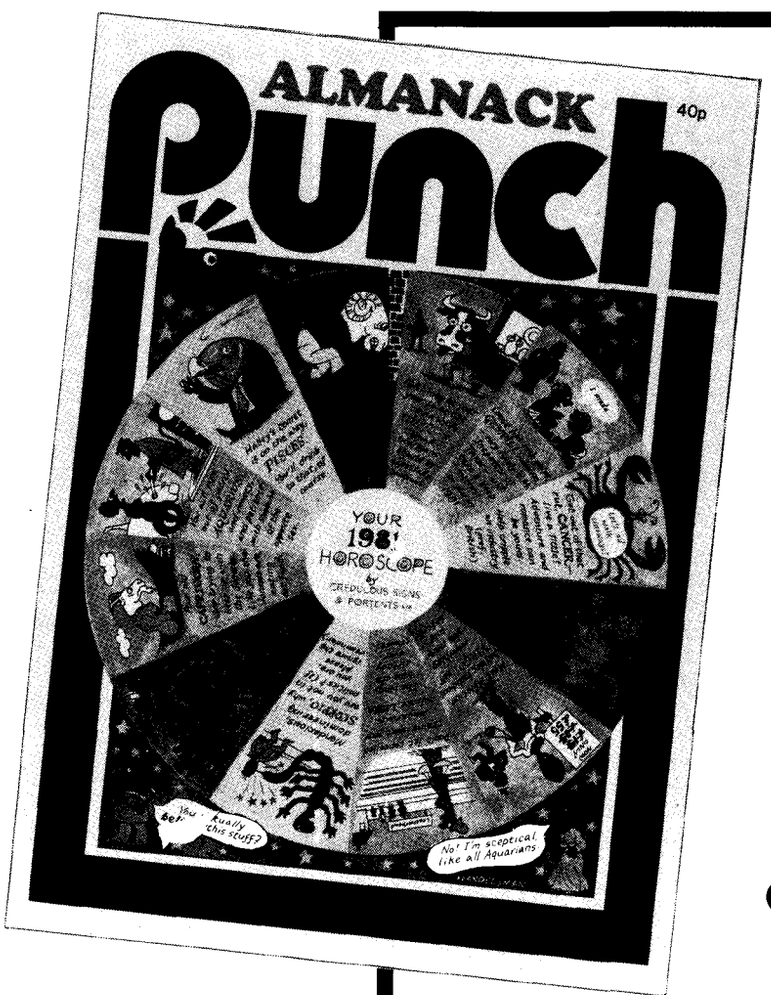
Among this week's contributors:

RICK ROGER'S *Crowther to Warnock: How Fourteen Reports Tried to Change Children's Lives* was published last month by Heinemann Educational.

COLIN MORTIMER is writing a book about 7:84. He is a playwright and currently working as a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company's Writers' Workshop.

KEN WORPOLE is a part-time WEA tutor who convenes writers' workshops in Hackney and Tottenham.

JAMES CAMPBELL is the editor of the *New Edinburgh Review.*



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Brush up your Christmas

JULIAN BARNES's guide to Yuletide television

CHRISTMAS, for the committed viewer, is a time marked by retinal dysfunction and severe bouts of cushion sickness; life itself seems to exist only by courtesy of the viewing room's Cloaca Maxima. To minimise your sense of unreality, the *NS* has previewed the seasonal offerings and feels confident about recommending the following shows. They have been specially vetted by the Front Half for correct political bias.

Mould on the Cupcake (LWT). Specially made film for television by Dennis Potter and Kenith Trodd. In the Bethlehem Suite of the Bristol Hilton, a group of advertising executives are getting drunk and swearing before going to bed with one another's wives. Meanwhile, in a small cottage on the edge of the Forest of Dean, Mary (Cheryl Campbell) is sitting up in bed rouging her nipples; perhaps old Joe (Bernard Miles) will be able to get it up tonight. Why does she seem much fatter than she used to be? Meanwhile, in the distance, three AA men on yellow motorbikes are driving through the night, while the last vestiges of Skylab are burning out in the sky . . . The production team scoured the world for a suitable place to recreate the contemporary city of 'Bristol', and eventually rebuilt chunks of it on the paradise island of Bali (financial adviser K. Trodd).

The Queen (BBC-1). HM introduces clips of her family holidays all round the world, tosses pebble into pond to symbolise how all our actions have wider effects, advises us to stay in Common Market, and announces engagement of heir to throne to Lady Diana Spencer.

The Queen (BBC-2). Barbara Cartland introduces clips of her family holidays, lies on sofa dictating novels, advises us all to rub honey into our armpits, and announces engagement of her step-granddaughter Lady Diana Spencer to young sporting chappie with no immediate prospects of promotion.

The Queen (ITV). Danny La Rue rubs honey into his armpits and makes jokes about hanging up his bristols to make way for younger, sporting chappie. Special guest: Dame Edna Everage, who announces . . .

Dallas (BBC-1). Ewing ranch is thrown into turmoil by the news that the ratings have dropped since everyone found out who shot J.R. Jock Ewing offers Jack Ruby-type solution to rekindle interest; Sue Ellen offers to come off the booze and start acting; Bobby offers to have a sex-change.

Christmas Day This Is Your Life (ITV). Eamonn whips out the leatherette volume for Chi Chi the panda. Pandas flown 6,000 miles from Pekin, China, to be with her tonight. Victor the Giraffe sadly unable to attend.

Lord Mountbatten Predicts (BBC-1). First of a special 52-part sequel to *Lord Mountbatten Remembers,* in which our hero tells us what will happen in the Eighties. Tonight: how I exploded the 'big bang' theory of the universe; how are the royalties doing?

Jim'll Fix It (BBC-1). Jim makes wonderful things happen for Sam (12), Nicola (8), Beryl (11) and Michael (67).

The Janet Brown Christmas Show (ITV). Janet wickedly impersonates Mrs T, Anna Ford, Princess Anne, Angela Rippon.

The Faith Brown Christmas Show (ITV). Faith wickedly impersonates Mrs T, Anna Ford, Princess Anne, Angela Rippon, Janet Brown.

The Stanley Baxter Christmas Show (ITV). Stanley wickedly impersonates Mrs T, Anna Ford, Princess Anne, Angela Rippon, Janet and Faith Brown.

The Rowan Atkinson Christmas Show (BBC-2). Rowan could wickedly impersonate . . . and Stanley Baxter, but doesn't. Advise switching over to *The Mike Yarwood Christmas Show* (ITV), where Mike wickedly impersonates . . .

Sorl Baht Boooox (BBC-1). Special edition of Russell Harty's show with Yuletide competition element. Russell talks to three distinguished guests (Lady Diana Mosley, Lady Diana Spencer and Lady in a Diaphana Sdress). What you have to do is try and spot the book they are talking about.

Placido Domingo's Christmas Choice (BBC-1). Special guests include Kiri te Kanawa and Kevin te Kaneegan. Watch Kevin (after his announcement of Prime Ministerial ambitions) garner the vital Covent Garden vote.

The Morecambe and Wise Christmas Show (await last-minute change of channel after Tommy Docherty-style transfer). Eric and Ernie welcome Glenda Jackson yet again as their special guest. Believed to be an attempt on the record for most-guesting on British TV (currently held by Peter Ustinov on *Parkinson*).

Billy Smart's Circus (BBC-1). With the Balmoral performing polo ponies, the Westminster Poodles and, from Yugoslavia, the Gangovri comedy low-wire artistes (whoops!). Special guests: Lassie, Emu, Fozzie Bear, Chi Chi, Barbara Woodhouse.

So You Think You Know About Christmas? (BBC-2). Cliff Michelmore and Magnus Magnusson host this seasonal offering of family entertainment. Two teams of celebrities — Tim Rice, Mary O'Hara and Paul Daniels (the Holly team) and Arthur Askey, Susan Hampshire and Basil Brush (the Ivy team) — test their knowledge on all aspects of Christmas. The Kings Singers provide a carol medley and Silvino Trompetto of the Savoy Hotel cooks some delicious dishes.

Fawlty Towers (BBC-2). 'Isybilla and the pot of Basil'. Special episode scripted by J. Keats. Isybilla loves Basil, who is her social inferior. Her two brothers cut off Basil's head. She puts it in a pot. Manuel cooks it and serves it to the colonel. The colonel eats it without noticing. John Cleese walks around without his head. Isybilla shoots Manuel.

TV FILMS: The BBC is showing 67 feature films over the festive period; ITV responds with a mere 42. We recommend:

Papillon: Not the pappy yawn some critics dubbed it. In this symbolic and widely misunderstood film, McQueen and Hoffman (Benn and Heffer) bravely escape from French-run prison island (EEC) by outwitting tall, bald governor.

Midnight Cowboy: Early Ronald Reagan western bought up by Woody Allen and redubbed. Very funny. Semiological note: why do both Reagan and Allen wear lumberjack shirts in their films?

A Touch of Class: More home movies about the life of our premier family.

The Towering Inferno: The late Steve McQueen as Virgil Maro, an experienced San Francisco fire officer, who guides Billy Dante round underground block of flats where fire is constant hazard. Moving to-camera speech at end in which Maro warns of future disasters if people don't stick to the rules.

True Grit: Biopic about small-town Swedish actress, Grit Ekland, who won heart of big movie star, then lost it. Morality tale, unsuitable for adults.

The Man With the Golden Gunn: Film about Californian hippy who sponges off expatriate British poet seeking alternative lifestyle.

The Front Page: How the cover story of the *NS* is decided upon. Sequel to *It's a Mad Mad Mad Mad World.* Murder mystery with comic overtones. Everything Turns Out All Right In The End. Just.

Ballet

Stephanie Jordan

Love & Greed

Manon, The Firebird, Dances of Albion, Dark Elegies *Royal Ballet, Covent Garden*

The Royal Ballet has just presented its first world première of the season: Glen Tetley's *Dances of Albion*, supported in a triple bill by revivals of Mikhail Fokine's *The Firebird* and Antony Tudor's *Dark Elegies.* The popular full-length *Swan Lake* and *Manon* at present make up the rest of the repertoire currently on show at Covent Garden.

Kenneth Macmillan's *Manon* (1974) is one of several stage versions of Abbé Prévost's 18th-century story of ill-fated Manon Lescaut and her love affair with Des Grieux. At the time of its 50th performance at Covent Garden the ballet proves that, despite revisions, cuts and valiant attempts from its stars to prove it a vehicle for intelligent dancing, it is still a failure, but a beautiful failure.

Jennifer Penney has matured in the role of the easily corrupted Manon. Very pretty, she possesses an icy chill and posed allure that work well, and even if Anthony Dowell as Des Grieux is the only person who manages to take her out of anything but herself, her finery and her erotic appeal, her self-centredness reveals itself even in their exchanges. Snatches of flippancy show, also a more endearing but equally persistent need for attention. She looks peeved when Des Grieux, despite having renounced riches for love, snatches her ill-earned diamond bracelet.

Anthony Dowell is still as pastel a character as his costume; his sense of stardom can only be partly to blame. His role simply demands gorgeous dancing and gets it. Much of his activity is unmotivated. Adamantly he pirouettes and casts elegant lines throughout the entire ballet, in tender love or in fury. His danced attentions are often and curiously directed away from the person on stage to

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whom they are, in fact, addressed.

For the rest of the ballet, neither Des Grieux nor Manon shows any convincing development of character. Other *personae* have little bearing upon the central plight of the lovers though there are vigorous performances, especially from Monica Mason as the mistress of Lescaut, Manon's depraved brother. In the end, one cannot really care about these two, except intermittently as the performers that we know well and want to execute their big dances beautifully. In Prévost's book, Des Grieux manages to alarm us by his dastardly actions in order to obtain Manon and also to move us by the love that drives him to these ends. A tension exists between the strength of this love and the unprincipled behaviour that sometimes endangers it, sometimes assures its perpetuation. In adhering to the full-length ballet format with its extended use of ensembles, pas de deux, and the various exchanges that are necessary to advance the action, Macmillan has not really shed any light upon this bitter tale from the *ancien régime*.

Marguerite Porter's recent injury enabled Fiona Chadwick, a newcomer from the lower ranks of the RB, to replace her in the title role of Fokine's *Firebird* on 29 November. The production this season looks older and wearier than it deserves, partly thanks to the slack conducting and ragged orchestral playing. Chadwick assumes the part intelligently. One can forgive her first performance for being a little anxious and lacking the necessary vibrancy but she already shows a promising command of the stage and a strong line. Stephen Jefferies plays a tactful Ivan Tsarevitch and Sandra Conley, with befitting gentleness and grace, the princess whom he eventually marries.

Tetley's *Dances of Albion: Dark Night Glad Day* takes its title from William Blake. A reproduction of Blake's painting, *The Dance of Albion: Glad Day*, appears helpfully in the programme, and Tetley has used two Britten scores for the music: *Serenade for Tenor, Horn and Strings* which includes, perhaps coincidentally, Blake's *Sick Rose Elegy*, as well as *Sinfonia da Requiem*. Beyond this, there is no clear literary link between Blake and the ballet except a generalised regard for the poet's 'revolutionary ideas and infinite sadness for mortality' mentioned by Tetley in a recent interview.

All of this is spiritually elevating but, alas, not manifest in performance. The *Serenade* (sung stylishly here by Robert Tear) features four leading dancers, Lesley Collier, Stephen Jefferies, Rosalyn Whitten and Wayne Eagling, who, supported occasionally by other dancers, respond in ecstatic solos and duets to Britten's nocturnal settings. Subsequently, during the bellicose *Sinfonia*, the figures of Stephen Beagley and Ashley Page, dark in manner if not in costume, yet obscure in significance, dominate the proceedings, and vanquish Jefferies before the final transfiguration. As the curtain falls, the four leads continue to slither immaculately among each other.

The choreographer Antony Tudor created *Dark Elegies* in 1937 for a small group of Ballet Rambert dancers and a diminutive stage. Expanded since for several large ballet companies, and recently revived for Ballet Rambert, *Dark Elegies* displays in masterly and consistent fashion the particular virtues lacking in *Manon* and *Albion*: a clear psychological attitude in movement, dynamic variety and economy. To Mahler's *Kindertotenlieder*, the Bereaved (peasants and presumably parents of lost children) dance their Laments and Resignation. Nothing is stated literally but the event is ritualised into a group dance with folk allusions. There is some pointe work but otherwise the movement barely looks balletic. Solo dances and a duet emerge from essentially communal activity.

Tudor selects a highly charged and resourceful body language that tells potently of feelings, strong enough to be deliberately camouflaged for much of the time. He restrains his dancers in their occupation of space, accentuates a taut, confined vertical line with parallel legs instead of the conventional, presentational ballet turnout, and allocates them a strict, level walk or stance with arms held tightly at the sides. Sometimes they tap their feet, heel and toe, nervously and delicately or work restlessly against the tempo and beat of the music. In solo sections, gestures become increasingly expansive, reaching a climactic expression of anguish. Then the dancer assumes a deceptive, stiff attitude of composure and returns to the fold. Only in the duet, with arms imprisoned above her head, does Porter rush off stage, inconsolable.

The company, led by Mason, Porter, Mark Silver, Michael Coleman, Conley and Jefferies dances this piece with great sincerity and care. Richard Jackson sings the Rückert settings eloquently. The new scenery and costumes by Roland Svensson are wintry: mostly blues, greys and mauves, rather less sympathetic than the shades of Nadia Benois' original designs. *Dark Elegies* was a highly influential and deeply moving work in 1937. This power remains.

Theatre

Benedict Nightingale

Do you Want me to Beg?

Television Times by PETER PRINCE *Warehouse*
More Out Than In by BERNARD KOPS *Bush*
Early Days by DAVID STOREY *Comedy*

Since television is the glassy-visaged monster that holds our so-called civilisation in thrall, it's surprising the theatre hasn't paid more attention to it, and refreshing to come across a playwright familiar with its private habits and a play that makes at least some attempt to chronicle them. The trouble with Peter Prince's theatrical debut, however, is that it tells us too many of the predictable things about his home medium, and sometimes tells them in too burlesque a style. Max Beerbohm's Savonarola Brown appears to have been responsible for the script of the 15-episode history of Britain ('we'll have to skip the odd century, of course') we hear being woodenly recited to the cameras offstage. I don't think the BBC would have bought it, or cast it so gruesomely. I don't think their American co-sponsors would try to reject the middle ages as 'not contemporary enough'. I don't think the grisly result would score a hit at the BAFTA awards. God help me, I somehow doubt if a feminist winner would be crass enough to regale the same ceremony with her disapproval of awards 'in principle' and her simultaneous acceptance of one to 'encourage all women to smash the male-dominated clique of TV drama'.

These objections are, of course, literal-minded, nit-picking, conceivably even humourless. Or, rather, they would be if Mr Prince didn't expect us to take much of his play very seriously indeed. *Television Times* is, I suspect, a sort of catharsis for him, an attempt to purge himself of some of the exasperation, disgust and self-doubt he must sometimes have felt as he listened to the shrill, competitive voices in the BBC club, or sat slumped in the control-room, witnessing the casual murder of his work: but he can't seem to decide whether this need is best fulfilled by teasing wit, rancorous satire, or grim psychological portraiture. On the contrary, he tries all three more or less at once, causing inevitable difficulties for his audiences. Can we really believe in the inner desperation of the screenwriter who has hitherto struck us as just another television mafioso, sticking verbal stilettos into his chums, receiving more of the same in his own back, and giving comically contradictory advice to the apprentice pensmith who has invaded his eyrie.

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The trouble is tone, mood, but also dramatic shape, emphasis. Suddenly this character is centre-stage, marital disaster having savaged his young rival up to his hotel room, implores crank out what we now seem meant to regard as effective, capable scripts. Indeed, he summons his young rival up to his hotel-room, implores him to withdraw from the project and, getting no joy, then and there crams himself full of tablets that turn out to be toxic. It is a striking scene, at times a very striking one; but it would prove more plausible if Mr Prince had ditched lines like 'Do you want me to beg, is that it?' and resisted the admittedly tempting irony of introducing a make-up lady to practise her skills on the would-be suicide's comatose countenance.

As it is, we still don't entirely believe in the character when he appears, miraculously resurrected, at the BAFTA awards, to read his former cronies a little lecture about telly being only a job and not, as they think, the whole world. The fault is not, I think, Karl Johnson's performance, nor Stephen Frears's direction, both of which do what justice they can to Mr Prince's mix of pep and sensitivity: it's Prince himself, a talented playwright who hasn't co-ordinated all his talents here.

Bernard Kops, like Prince, has written often for TV in recent years; but, unlike him, has a substantial body of theatrical work dating from a still earlier time. Remember *Enter Solly Gold* and *The Hamlet of Stepney Green,* those exuberant and enjoyable attacks on a glum, constrictive society, or the horror-comic *Lemmings* and *Home Sweet Honeycomb*, showing that society at its deadliest? His plays were untidy, sprawling, apt to veer from extremes of elation to extremes of alienation, as if they'd been free-associated by a manic-depressive: which I have (of course) no reason to suppose they actually were.

More Out Than In does, however, suggest that Kops has recently been busy observing other people's afflictions, since its cast includes a nymphomaniac, a chronic alcoholic, a boy arsonist and a girl defective, and its main character has just been released from 20 years in the asylum.

Partly, it's an angry exposure of the inadequacies of the care presently offered the mentally convalescent; partly, a celebration of the unruly energy of those our society prefers to reject.

A decade away from the live theatre seems to have done little to reduce the hectic, scrambled quality in Kops's writing; but, if that's a fault at all, it's a small one beside his still-marked enthusiasm for crudely caricaturing his social enemies. The muscular cleric who tells the increasingly anguished protagonist that he's 'condemning yourself to everlasting hell', or the hostel-keeper who begins by patronising him as a 'good boy' and ends viciously spitting that he's 'hopeless, useless, of no value to anyone', might have a place in a late-Victorian melodrama: in a play that aspires to be at least an impressionistic critique of modern social policy, they seem the merest self-indulgence. Condescension and oppression take subtler, slyer forms than that nowadays.

The best of Kops's play is its humane, gritty handling of the main character, remarkably well performed by Bill Stewart, a pink, pinched rodent squinting, blinking, snuffling to himself as he scrabbles and claws his way up towards the light; and most people seem to think that the best of David Storey's *Early Days* is Ralph Richardson, also cutting a somewhat mole-like figure as he peers myopically around, in search of potential victims. This is surely unfair to Storey, who brings his usual unassuming intelligence to what is, to put it no higher, a thoroughly absorbing impression of what happens in old age to a man who has lived by, with and for power and that alone.

I still think that Sir Ralph is actually a notch or two over-amiable, considering the malice of which the ex-Tory politico he plays remains capable, and the trouble he painstakingly causes his sagging family. But at least he seems sure of his lines, which is more than he was when the piece opened at the National last spring; and as a result the rest of Lindsay Anderson's cast, some of whom must have been thinking that the stage was a plank which they were walking, now give very much more confident and relaxed performances.

Films

John Coleman

Mister Bates

Stardust Memories (AA) *Screen on the Hill, Gate, Notting Hill; Cinecenta*
Flash Gordon (A) *ABC, Shaftesbury Avenue, Classic, Haymarket; Studio, Oxford Circus, general release*
The Dogs of War (AA) *Odeon, Leicester Square*
Any Which Way You Can (AA) *Warner West End; Classic, Oxford Street; Scene; ABCs Bayswater, Fulham and Edgware Road*
Hawk the Slayer (A) *Odeon, Marble Arch*
The Chain Reaction (AA) *Warner West End 3*
Freedom Road (AA) *London Pavilion*
The Wildcats of St Trinian's (A) *Odeon, Westbourne Grove; general release from 21 December.*

Earnest and emphatic in interview, the actor, writer and director Woody Allen is concerned that we should not fall into the trap of finding parallels between his own career and persona and those of Sandy Bates (Mr Allen), an actor, writer and director. But, by all that is Woody, we can hardly do otherwise. *Stardust Memories,* both artfully and artily photographed by Gordon Willis, follows Sandy during a hectic, nostalgic, memory-racked weekend at a retrospective festival of his work being held at an out-of-season seaside hotel. He has just made a 'serious', Bergmanesque film, to the despair of his producers; three attractive women pop up from the past, into the present; he is besieged by fans, critics, culture-vultures and angst. If this Sandy spends an inordinate amount of his time scrawling autographs, Woody's autograph is all over the resulting movie which is — as everyone has rightly pointed out — a work in progress, a work about the difficulty of *making*

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progress, and the nearest reputable equivalent of Fellini's *8½* that anyone is ever likely to bring off. It also incorporates just about every objection to its procedures that might be levelled at it, attempting to deflate by anticipation. A question about 'homage' is engagingly parried: 'No, we just stole the idea.'

As grotesque Fellini faces swim and loom distortedly into camera; as Sandy is outlined in his New York apartment against a giant blow-up of a famous Vietnam atrocity photo and ruminates on the unimportance of his art, of all art, in the eye of time; as flashbacks show the black side of his affair with elegant, neurotic Dorrie (Charlotte Rampling) — we may well shift with unease, unprofitably. The bleakness seems cheaply bought. The audacious fragments do not come together at the end, as they miraculously did in *8½*. Yet I would willingly forgo all the other items in this week's Xmas list for a second visit to *Stardust Memories*.

At his most self-regarding, Woody Allen is a wry, risk-taking, wisecracking, inventive talent, wispy head and slouched shoulders above the throng of smooth Lilliputians. Items: the brilliant, parody Bergman opening in a subway train, ending on a drear beach; the flashback to Master Bates's magic act; the memory of a blissful moment of raptness with Dorrie; the joke horror-skit insert with his Hostility, a furry monster, ferrying off victims; the hash-bearing girl fan whom an admiring husband has driven to the hotel to plant in his bed; and — sputtering throughout — the squibby, throw-away gags. As Sandy fights his way through sycophants, a journalist may just be heard muttering, 'I'm doing this piece on the shallow indifference of wealthy celebrities'. The great little man is asked for one more autograph: 'To Kevin and *Mendel*? — what are they. . . *children*?' Phobia-ridden, he knows what pigeons are: 'rats with wings'. And, as in *Manhattan*, the score — from early jazz to Glenn Miller — is marvellously found, rotten with my kind of associations, merry and sad.

Mike Hodges's *Flash Gordon* has aroused ire in some quarters for being so terribly expensive, a complaint that would seem to be justified in the crazy world of movie budgets only if the thing failed to entertain. With only the haziest recall of the old Universal serials starring Buster Crabbe, I found it very good fun for the most part, if shifted over into camp ground. But enough goes on at speed, amid vast, gaudy sets, and there is sufficient regard to fleeting evil (Max Von Sydow as merciless Ming, a touch or two of torture) to spice up its worst whimsy. A handsome cipher Sam Jones introduces himself breezily to the master of Mongo: 'Flash Gordon, quarterback, New York Jets', and has a ready response when the slit-eyed monarch has plans for his girlfriend (bubbly Melody Anderson): 'Remove the earthwoman; prepare her for our pleasure'. 'Forget it, Ming. Dale's with me.'

The all-American couple have been shanghaied into space by Dr Zarkov (a mercifully muted Topol), to save the earth from destruction, and there is a splendid little filmlet, directed by Denis Postle, when a brain-drained Zarkov's entire past life flicks by on a TV screen. Other pleasures are a winged Brian Blessed, roaring with laughter like some crazed big-store Santa, as leader of the Hawkmen and some stunning (and comic) images as his host of fliers flappingly fills the wide screen; the various colours of blood seeping from corpses — green for Ming; a whip-fight on a spiky circular platform; and a boisterous musical accompaniment, courtesy of Queen. Ornella Muti is extremely fetching as naughty, amorous Princess Aura, not least when mouthing the unforgettable line, 'No, *not* the Bore Worms!'

Readers of Frederick Forsyth's *The Dogs of War*, which lets me out, may or may not be satisfied with the two-hour screen reduction directed with pace and some lucidity by TV's John Irvin, more recently known for *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*. A political thriller about a band of mercenaries assembled by emotionally and physically scarred Jamie Shannon (Christopher Walken) to overthrow an Amin-style West African dictator, it goes mazy in the pyrotechnicalities of the last assault but packs a surprise 'moral' punch. Mr Irvin does his accomplished best with the recruitment details all over Europe, the accumulation of weaponry, and a sly, probable sequence where Shannon — on a first African reconnoitre — is encouraged to share his money, booze and fags with a corrupt customs official. Colin Blakely is too shortly around as a hard-drinking TV reporter and Mr Walken's rather petulant beauty is often at odds with the small demands of his role.

Any Which Way You Can is Clint Eastwood's follow-up to *Every Which Way But Loose*, which was misdirected by one James Fargo. This is misdirected by one Buddy Van Horn, but Mr Eastwood's hands are every which way apparent, knocking senseless anyone unwise enough to call him out. Once again, he lazes through as pugilistic Philo, reconciled with Sondra Locke as his lackadaisical woman, outplayed by several orangutans. The ape Clyde's big trick is defecating on the seats of police cars and much, this time, is made of his sex life, as well as that of Ruth Gordon as Ma Boggs. Tastelessness is ever available for redefinition. Come back, Mr Eastwood, before nothing is forgiven.

Least awful of other festive offerings is Terry Marcel's *Hawk the Slayer*, which moves back to some undefined long-ago, shoves Jack Palance under a peekaboo helmet (one side of his face is apparently all blistery) as wicked, wicked Voltan holding an abbess (sweet, wasted Annette Crosbie) to ransom, and sets his eponymous younger brother against him as the blindingly dull epitome of Good. Bernard Bresslaw as a giant and others as a dwarf, an elfin archer and a nice witch help Hawk out. One or two crafty special effects, notably a magic sword, do not an epic make. The Australian *The Chain Reaction* presupposes a massive leak of nuclear waste and security efforts to hush it up, led by an egregiously hamming baddie. It might have occurred to someone that the issues toyed with here are a thought too serious for weak horror-movie fodder. *Freedom Road*, taken from the bestselling Howard Fast novel, yokes together Muhammad Ali and Kris Kristofferson in a bewilderingly cut tract about the fate of emergent blacks after the Civil War. Frank Launder's *The Wildcats of St Trinian's* squeaks in as the worst film of 1980, in itself a breathtaking achievement..

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Music

Andrew Clements

Priapic Cogency

King Priam *Festival Hall/Radio 3*
Lutoslawski *Festival Hall/Radio 3*

What might have seemed at first merely the most generous of the tributes to Sir Michael Tippett on his 75th birthday turned out to be far more than that. The chance to re-evaluate *King Priam*, most neglected of Tippett's operas, in a concert performance without the theatrical trappings of the familiar Wanamaker/Kenny staging for Covent Garden, enforced a new perspective: it becomes if not his most personal and lovable opera (*The Knot Garden*, for me, will always be that) then the most cogent, most dramatically acute. There are still problems, particularly in the length and lack of clear focus in the third act, but the libretto is direct and finely honed, and the music is as sparely effective as any Tippett has written.

The accuracy and confidence of the Festival Hall performance was no doubt an enormous advantage. David Atherton has conducted the work at Covent Garden but here, with the London Sinfonietta alive to every rhythmic nuance and effortlessly negotiating every twist and turn of the sinewy accompaniments, with a list of singers difficult to better among British ranks, he could demonstrate unfailingly the merits of the score, presenting the musical text plainly and precisely. More completely than ever before also, for the cuts imposed on the third act in the Royal Opera production were restored.

Written between 1958 and 1961, *Priam* has long been seen as the watershed in the development of Tippett's style. The delicate web of lyricism, the prodigal efflorescence of his first opera *The Midsummer Marriage* and the pieces immediately following it was replaced by music with harder edges; lines acquired a bare angularity, orchestration became simpler and cast in primary colours. It spawned a family of works including the Concerto for orchestra and the second piano sonata in which the music was conceived in blocks of sonority, transitions abolished. This is true enough; some change of style was inevitable for an opera with the subject matter of an essentially impersonal epic. But the close scrutiny of the score which this marvellously lucid performance allowed reveals the change not to have been so comprehensively radical as one might have thought. There is still a large amount of beautifully florid instrumental writing to be found buried in the vocal accompaniments — it is pared down certainly, for in *Priam* Tippett never uses an ensemble when a single instrumental colour would have the same yet more direct expressive effect — and the sprung rhythms of the vocal lines that so characterise *The Midsummer Marriage* may still be sought out here in the more reflective moments. Achilles' aria which forms the marvellous centrepiece of the second act can be seen in direct line of descent from Tippett's settings of Lewis and Keyes in *The Heart's Assurance* and leading onwards into the 1960s to Dov's songs, in *The Knot Garden*.

The Midsummer Marriage paid lip-service to the concept of Eliotic verse-drama and used it to concoct a fairly murky brew of myth and Jungian symbolism in which outlines of motive and personality are all but dissolved; there are times when the listener's patience is kept in check only by the irresistible magic of the music.

But Tippett's discovery of Brecht's concept of epic drama paid dividends in *Priam*. A chorus of Trojans to comment on the actions of their superiors serves both as extra narrative freight and to provide material for transitions when the staging would demand them, and also to point up the basic dilemmas of the action. The choice that Paris must make between love of Helen and love of his homeland/father at the end of Act 1 is the fulcrum of the action; its consequences in the Trojan war are depicted in Act 2 — a marvellous piece of stark, concise writing, perfectly proportioned — and the third act can then knit together the threads of its inevitable tragic outcome.

Because this is an epic, characters are not given depth; their personal relationships are seen only in the terms of the drama itself. Hence no catharsis, only the gradual clearing of the decks for the final fulfilling of the prophecy: Priam's long monologue after he discovers the death of Hector is the act's centre-piece but it is too long and the surrounding chorus interludes dilute its impact.

In this performance (which Decca by now will have recorded for release in 1981) Priam's position at the centre of the drama was underlined by Norman Bailey's singing of the role. Bailey has not sung it in the opera house and there were moments of uncertainty as if he were easing himself into some of the more tortuous passages, but there is already a nobility and assurance never heard before in the opera. Robert Tear has graduated from singing Paris at Covent Garden to become a moving, passionate Achilles; Thomas Allen (Hector) was utterly secure as one might expect. Among the women (less important here than in any other Tippett opera) Yvonne Minton was outstanding as Andromache.

The sterling quality of the *Priam* performance rather shaded the British première two days earlier of Lutoslawski's Double Concerto for oboe, harp and chamber orchestra, in a BBC Symphony Orchestra concert conducted by the composer and with Heinz and Ursula Holliger as soloists. In any other week such an unfailingly well-made and beautiful piece would have demanded top-billing. It works upon the familiar felicities of what I suppose must now be regarded as final-period Lutoslawski, for in recent works his music has seemed content to remain within established boundaries. If anything this unwillingness to explore is more palpable in the new concerto and now there is also a suspicion of predictability.

If one were to write a pastiche of a possible Lutoslawski concerto for these instruments it would be very likely to turn out like this: a characteristic cloud of divided strings to open, juxtaposed with freely superimposed cadenzas for oboe and harp, a second movement which moves gradually into a crabbed lyricism. A cheeky, Shostakovich-like repeated-note tune that dominates the finale is the only surprise and its final layered accumulation makes the most satisfying movement, but throughout the soloistic writing is unadventurous by the standards of much contemporary music. If Lutoslawski has at last felt moved to remind us of the origins of his style deep within a Bartokian neoclassicism then the Double Concerto does so in a very subtle and *non*-neoclassical way. But some sense of disappointment in a composer who has provided such a series of richly original works in the last two decades is difficult to resist.

Double Fantasy

MARK KIDEL on John Lennon

Lennon did not die, like an ordinary rock hero, from an overdose of sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. The deaths of Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, Brian Jones and Jim Morrison provided instant mass metaphors for the price of excess and stardom, the disintegration of frail human personalities unable to cope with the strains of being made larger than life. John Lennon's death is more tragic just because it was less self-inflicted than the more standard martyrdoms of the rock world. He had withdrawn from the 'game' as he put it so movingly in 'Watching the Wheels', the most powerful track on his patchy last album with Yoko Ono, *Double Fantasy*, and the most telling clue towards an understanding of where Lennon stood before his death.

He had, in a sense, been almost forgotten in his long retirement, his image crystallising into that inflexible form that the mass media necessarily impose: so much so that many found it difficult to reconcile the highly personal tone of *Double Fantasy* with the outspoken social comment of his early solo career and the dadaist humour of the Beatles' golden years. Lennon had moved on, unwilling to feed the needs of those who wished so deeply to consume him.

This particular event — the very public death of a man who both fought and accepted the fact that he had become public property — and the general reaction to it illuminate the rock culture's relationship with its stars: Lennon was the working-class hero, the rebellious art student, the rock 'n' roller, the peace-worker, the poet and the fool, all aspects of the generation that grew up in the Sixties and Seventies: he had become a part of us all and had slipped into our collective unconscious.

Beyond all these speculations lies the very real contribution which John Lennon made to the history of rock 'n' roll, all of it now celebrated in 10 days of media eulogy, an orgy of near-necrophilia characteristic of the machine that made the Beatles rich and famous. There is no doubting Lennon's qualities as a songwriter, and his role as one who put creativity and art into a truly popular context, enormously widening the forum in which world views and realities are made.

It was his almost innocent closeness with the realm of feelings that led John Lennon into primal therapy with Janov. The heart of this work has to do with being in touch with one's own truth, and Lennon's dedication to his personal path — a way shared with Yoko Ono — and his profound honesty led him increasingly further away from the standard games of the rock and political worlds. Many — yearning for the comfortable preservation of a predictable 'earlier' Lennon — have suggested that Yoko destroyed his powers of creativity, and, as it were, emasculated him. She did change him, of course: that much is clear from *Double Fantasy*, and it is those very change

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which critics have found so threatening, because they call into question the patriarchal values of contemporary society.

Lennon struggled to get underneath the 'spectacle', the stage-managed show of mass media culture and politics that Guy Debord of the Situationists identified so clearly in the Sixties. He wanted to go beyond the self-righteous abstraction of ideology and sloganeering, and into the only arena in which truthful statements can be made: that is why he came out as himself, a frail, vulnerable and child-like person, as open to ridicule as he was to the five bullets that destroyed him.

Weekend Competition

No 2648 **Set by Stanley J. Sharpless**

Recent weeks have seen Mrs Thatcher described as the Enid Blyton of politics and Denis Healey as the thinking man's Frank Chapple. More such illuminating comparisons for contemporary British figures, please. Max. 10 goes each; by 9 January.

No 2645 **Set by Fluffy Flukin**

Suitably Moggish leaders on the sale of *The Times* to some inappropriate buyer.

Report **By Al Fresco**

It's quite alarming, you know, the effect that our little Competition seems to have. Just one whiff of gentle mockery from the Complex and Mr Rees-Mogg feels duty bound to lay down his pen in favour of the three-pin plug. And moreover, *Times* leaders have of late been parodying themselves more and more furiously in an attempt to undercut us. Take last Wednesday, for instance, when, starting as it meant to go on, the main leader opened: 'Westminster's uphill road to the pacification of Ulster is paved with pregnant phrases.'

Still, try as the Thunderer may to upstage us, our compers are more than capable of rising to the challenge. Working with enormous handicaps (as A.G. Cock pathetically asked — how *can* anyone do an authentic Rees-Mogg in a mere 100 words?), you showed a fine sense of style and feeling for the absurd. Eight green ones to each of you with our seasonal compliments; oh, and by the way, peace and goodwill to the Thunderer and its staff, too.

GRAVE DECISIONS

We at *The Times* have become accustomed to the idea of mortality, so it is peculiarly appropriate that our new proprietor should be dead. Eyebrows may be doubly raised at Sir Oswald Mosley's being not only dead but a Fascist, yet it is questionable whether a live Fascist, or a dead person of another persuasion, would truly have filled the bill. There is, too, an actuarial reason for pleasure. Readers of *The Times* die more insistently than those of other newspapers. Our assumption of a dead proprietor should reassure them that, *mutatis mutandis,* we shall continue serving their interests. MICHAEL LEAPMAN

THE VOICE OF MODERATION

It is symptomatic alike of the shallowness of our *soi-disant* libertarians' attachment to the cause of press freedom, and to the depth of the hypocrisy with which they daily trumpet that attachment that the announcement that *The Times* is to become the official organ of the British Movement should be greeted with howls of factitious fury. *The Times* is, as ever, impartial, but with *Tribune* spewing out the poison of the far Left and the *Telegraph, Express, Sun* and *Mail* representing moderate centrist opinion, it is apparent that today's thinking Right has at present no platform from which to disseminate views far less intemperate than those propounded by the bullyraggers of Blackpool . . . MARTIN FAGG

TEMPORA MUTANTUR

A new page of history is written; a crisis averted; a heritage preserved. *The Times* has been sold to the *New Statesman.* Let us not to the marriage of true minds admit impediment. Under the editorship of Mr Roy Jenkins, *The New Timesman* will subsume the increasingly outmoded political concepts of Left and Right in the Broad Church of centralist pluralism (or, as some may prefer to call it, pluralist centralism). Its editorial commitment will be the de-polarisation of the seemingly irreconcilable polarities that are tearing our country apart. For none can gainsay: *tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.*

STANLEY J. SHARPLESS

THE LIGHT TOUCH

. . . for too long have British newspapers gravitated towards the metropolitan view of events and have tended to disregard the rich minutiae of provincial thought and activity. Mr Les Dawson, the new proprietor of *The Times,* has already ordained that broader and lighter coverage be given to events north of Watford and in these sombre times few will quarrel with Mr Dawson's felicitous motto 'A laff in every paragraph'. The diminution of prudery is always desirable and we venture to hope that a more sunny journalistic style might smooth the furrowed brows of our readers ancient and modern. GERRY HAMILL

KEEPING ABREAST OF THE TIMES

So Mr Paul Raymond has won. But, *pace* Mr David Holbrook, this does not mean that *The Times* has lost. Of course there will be changes. It was to be expected that Mr Raymond, having bought himself a newspaper, should wish to make it into his own image. That his modest proposals should prove too much for some readers was also no surprise. We have, after all, come this way before. We were chastised for giving over our front page to news; we were chastised again for returning it to classified advertising (of, admittedly, a kind new to *The Times*). Mr Levin's own debut in these pages was not to everyone's taste; it is hardly likely that his successor's will be either. But the dust will settle round Miss Richmond's column. Six pages of readers' letters; 19 pages of contact ads; the most authoritative half-column of national and international news in Fleet Street: Mr Holbrook must learn not to mistake a change of approach for one of quality. MIKE STOREY

CONVENIENT AND DEPENDABLE

The relative merits of innumerable prospective purchasers of *The Times* have been much canvassed. Now the survival of this bastion of the English-speaking world is assured by the timely intervention of Colonel Sanders. There can be no misgivings about his aptitude, as witness his impressive record in industrial relations, distribution, marketing and provision of solid, dependable, impartial fare. Spice and flavour are the prerequisites of journalism. Readers should welcome the repackaging of *The Times* in convenient form, the pleasant daily additions of disposable towels, dispensing with newsprint-stained fingers, and a fresh crossword pencil. In Churchill's phrase: 'Some chicken'. BILL GREENWELL

UNITED WITH OUR COMRADES

Only the most desperately cynical will view the acquisition of this newspaper by the CPSU as a crudely expedient transaction. This body's proven responsibility in securing the foundations of the Soviet state and administering law over a large and heterogeneous population amply qualifies it not simply as a capable, but as a natural, owner of *The Times.* Its record of stability, and above all its unwavering ethical consistency, reprove our own condition, 'with its sick hurry, its divided aims'. Born in a happier age, *The Times* passes into a further stage of its history as the — let us say it — comrade organ of *Pravda* and *Isvestia. Vae victis.* BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

Tony Miles

Chess

No 210 **Russian temperament**

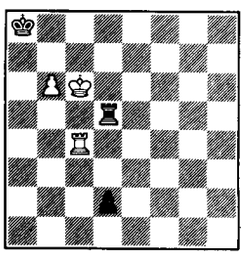
The most bizarre incident of the Olympiad came in the USSR/Bulgaria match on bottom board where the dreaded Kasparov had black against Georgiev. Kasparov likes sharp variations and that always involves the risk of a prepared line. This time the Bulgarian was well and truly ready. The game opened **1.P-K4, P-QB4; 2.N-KB3, P-Q3; 3.P-Q4; PxP; 4.NxP, N-KB3; 5.N-QB3, P-QR3; 6.B-N5, P-K3; 7.P-B4, Q-B2; 8.Q-B3, P-N4; 9.0-0-0, P-N5.** I neither know nor wish to know how much of this has occurred before. I suspect all, and probably the next few moves as well, but from Kasparov's reaction something, somewhere, came as a big surprise. The fireworks commence. **10.P-K5, B-N2; 11.N(3)-N5, PxN; 12.BxPch, KN-Q2.** In view of what follows perhaps QN-Q2 should be preferred though doubtless that runs into some more analysis. **13.NxP! PxN; 14.Q-R3, K-B2;** forced, **15.P-B5!** Now Kasparov sank into deep thought. The natural move is 15 . . . NxP and a refutation is not obvious eg 16.PxPch, K-N1; 17.P-K7, BxKP; 18.Q-K6ch, K-B1; 19.KR-B1ch, N-B6. Anyway, when he woke up the young GM produced **15 . . . B-K5.** However, unless he was already completely lost he missed the strength of **16.PxPch, K-N1; 17.QN3!** when after **17 . . . BxBP; 18.QxB, QxQch; 19.KxQ, NxP; 20.P-K7** White regains all his material with a winning position.

It was now that the amusement began. Kasparov played **20 . . . BxP** and, as White went to play 21.BxB, he insisted that Georgiev had touched his QP and must therefore play 21.RxP! This was really rather a silly stunt since it was blatantly obvious to anyone who knows how to move the pieces that White has only one move. However, there were four eye witnesses: two Russians who saw Georgiev touch the pawn, one Bulgarian and a nonaligned bystander who saw him playing BxB. One would have thought that the matter could have been settled quickly and quietly, but no. First the local arbiter arrived, then a more senior one and then the chief controller, Lothar Schmid. Soon there were at least half a dozen controllers and thirty onlookers clustered round the board in noisy debate. Unfortunately I happened to be playing on the adjoining table. After 10 or 15 minutes of failing to concentrate I asked the controller that the mêlée be moved to the analysis room (which seemed an exceedingly sensible idea) or for permission to stop my clock. The latter was, slightly grudgingly, granted. Meanwhile the disturbance continued for something like half an hour with games around still trying to continue.

Eventually Georgiev was allowed to play **21.BxB** and a disgruntled Kasparov went on to lose. Such an incident scarcely reflects well on Kasparov — who clearly has not learned how to lose — or on the controllers. That a relatively trivial dispute could go on for so long was ridiculous; that it did so, noisily, in the middle of the tournament hall and all the other games, quite absurd.

Problem 210

White to play. How should the game go? Answers to me at the NEW STATESMAN postmarked no later than 7 January.



Solution to problems 208

1 . . . R-N3ch; 2.K-R1 (if 2.K-B1, Q-Q3! 3.N-B3, N-Q7ch; 4.K-K2, NxNP wins); Q-B5!! Resigns since if 3.QxQ, NxPmate, or 3.PxN, Q-N5; or 3.QxN, Q-B8ch; or 3.N-B3, QxQ; 4.PxQ, N-B7mate.

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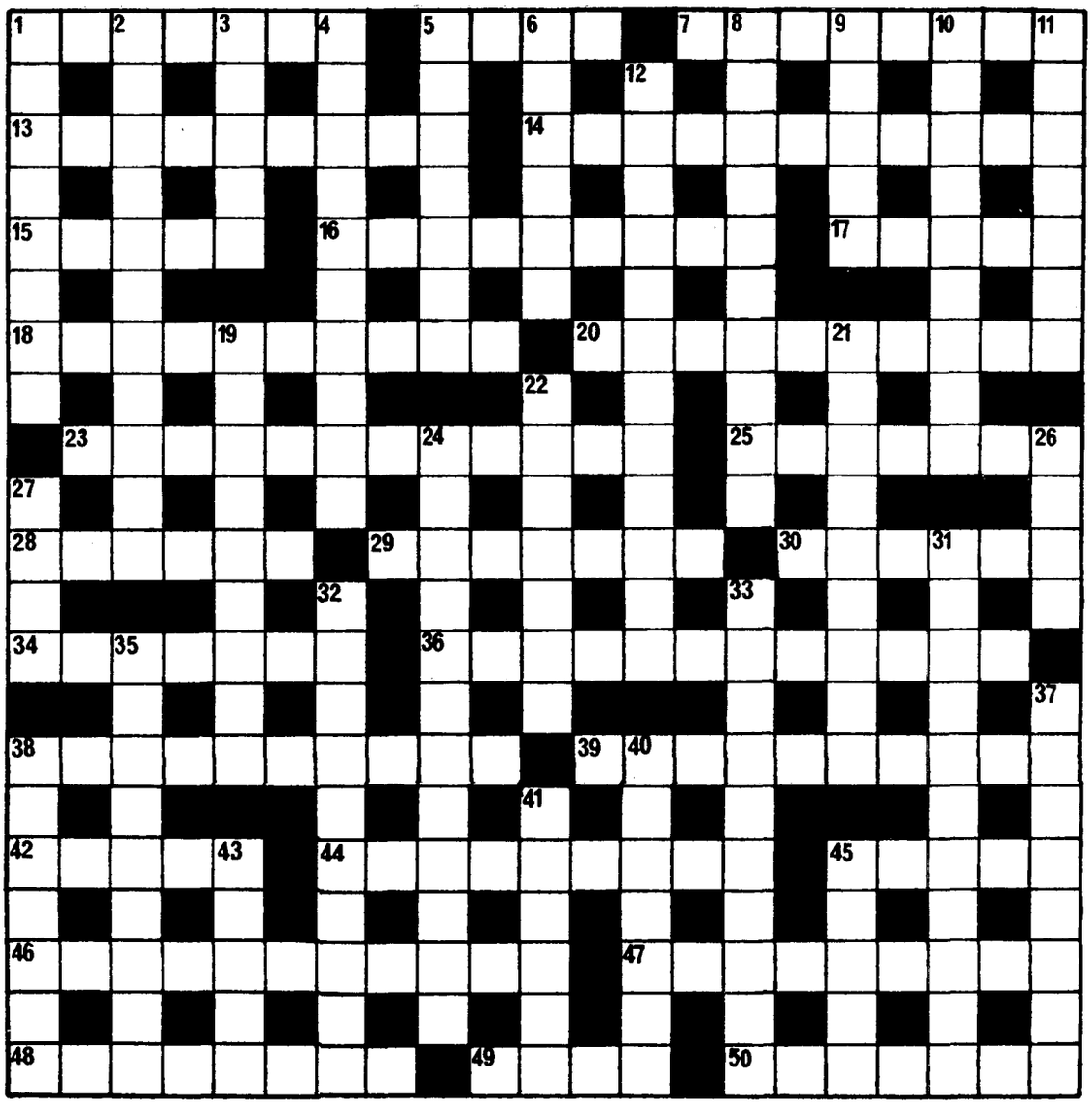

CHRISTMAS CROSSWORD 1367

BIGGER PRIZES

Book tokens of £5 for the first five correct solutions opened.
Entries to Christmas Crossword 1367, New Statesman, Great Turnstile London WC1V 7HJ by first post 9 January 1981.

Solution to No 1365

Prizewinners to No 1365

Brian Downie (West Bromwich)
Sara Spain (London)
J. Houghton (Preston)

ACROSS

1. Celebrated over Christmas, has to walk with a female (7)
5. Costly, but it may be addressed to anyone (4)
7. Inspiration is low in an unfinished spot of bother (8)
13. Defeat in open argument outside the hospital (9)
14. Make her go to some pantomime (6,5)
15. Wise men provide place for carols (5)
16. This is the Christmas of the century (9)
17. Duck in sugary stuff, it won't go on ice (5)
18. Those who cancel it may make the fun sillier (10)
20. Ruses for discovering stones in layers? (10)
23. Wrongly handled it with broken net, showing lack of obvious ability (6,6)
25. In conclusion the suit is enclosed (7)
28. Mix an alloy with nothing for a Jesuit (6)
29. He flies but gives way in a height (7)
30. God is after the beginning of Christmas in part of carol (6)
34. Led astray in the fog although it was far from Christmassy weather (7)
36. The north is not cloudy possibly, but it is no place to stay at Christmas (6,6)
38. They are in opposition in states he corrupted (10).
39. Idea for Athene? (10)
42. Shelter with honour given for healer (5)
44. Start amid chaos as author (9)
45. Fibre makes girl hold one back (5)
46. Pantomime character has striking success in strange town (11)
47. What kings have about two points, but they make three (5,4)
48. Bank on the Spanish for something to put in crackers (8)
49. Christmas light brings animals back (4)
50. Stop for a time, taking us in to buy presents perhaps (7)

DOWN

1. A member present? (8)
2. Rome provides Italy with centre (7,4)
3. Putting a point in the covers shows lack of goodwill (5)
4. No swearing is needed by people who own reindeer (10)
5. Old lady discovers the wit in an actor (7)
6. Confesses a *Christmas Carol* character turns up in advertisements (6)
8. Not the seaside place for the salt (10)
9. Reason puts something associated with Christmas in charge (5)
10. Christ rose, but neither were this (9)
11. They look for oriental king among wise men (7)
12. Occasions for swearing when, e.g., Kings Cross is in a bad state (12)
19. Dig tunnel wrongly for providing pleasure (9)
21. Nearly all of the local choir has become full of Christmas spirit (9)
22. Fight in the colours of Father Christmas to get presents (7)
24. People who go on ahead to bring forward the celebrations (7,5)
26. In case it is cold I should like turkey perhaps (4)
27. Pudding ingredient which is to give the lead, we hear (4)
31. Being born again could make one as sane and nicer (11)
32. Those who turn up for a social activity after nine (10)
33. Curses trip being reorganised for where the Christmas story is told (10)
35. Writing used by the sober in looking round drunkenly (9)
37. Although favourite I did lose for a change (8)
38. Granted the holy one is beheaded (7)
40. One enters a list to take part in the celebrations (7)
41. A female in the child's place? Impossible! (6)
43. Place among the reasons why they like Christmas (5)
45. Christmas transport for the potentially penniless (5)

SETSQUARE

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Answers to the Colonel's Christmas Quiz

1) Battle of the Nile; 2) A monstrous crow; 3) Julia Ward Howe; 4) The Somme; 5) George Orwell; 6) Aid to countries under Soviet domination; 7) Beethoven

Spouting

1) Morris Udal; 2) Gore Vidal; 3) Denis Thatcher; 4) Richard Ingrams and John Wells (in 'Dear Bill'); 5) Jacquetta Hawkes; 6) Kenneth Toomey (hero of Burgess's *Earthly Powers*)

Wounding

1) Browning on Wordsworth; 2) Howard Brenton on Margaretta D'Arcy; 3) Goldsmith on Garrick; 4) Beerbohm on Shaw; 5) Roger Woddis on Ian Trethowan; 6) Pope on Addison

Eighty

1) Michael Foot (who broke his ankle just after publication of his book *Debts of Honour*); 2) John Lennon (whose last record, *Starting Over*, was released just before his death); 3) Two keepers at John Aspinall's zoo were killed by a tiger; 4) At HRH's suggestion, vast quantities of 'Kensington Gore' were used in O'Toole's *Macbeth;* 5) The Scottish swimmer Jimmy Carter was sent home from the Olympics after an 'incident'; 6) Sanjay Gandhi; 7) Alfred Hitchcock

Beastly

1) Nellie the elephant; 2) The hippopotamus (in Flanders and Swann); 3) Henny Penny; 4) Sir Oran Haut-ton (in Peacock's *Melincourt*); 5) The walrus; 6) The common cormorant or shag; 7) Ogden Nash; 8) Hilaire Belloc; 9) Lennon/McCartney; 10) Christopher Smart; 11) Thomas Gray; 12) Oliver Goldsmith; 13) A.P. Herbert

Who

1) Gollum in the *Lord of the Rings* (J.R.R. Tolkien); 2) Meriam, the hired girl, in *Cold Comfort Farm* (Stella Gibbons); 3) Violet Elizabeth Bott in *Just William* (Richmal Crompton); 4) Wordsworth in *Travels with my Aunt* (Graham Greene); 5) Keats in *Abba Abba* (Anthony Burgess); 6) Mrs Weir in the *Weir of Hermiston* (R. L. Stevenson); 7) Tom Sawyer & Huck Finn in *Tom Sawyer* (Mark Twain); 8) William Dunbar in his 'Lament for the Makaris'.

The Proper Study

1) Franz Mesmer; 2) Gall & Spurzheim (phrenology); 3) Kretschmer & Sheldon; 4) Burrhus Frederick Skinner; 5) Ivan Petrovitch Pavlov; 6) Alfred Binet; 7) Abraham Maslow; 8) Sigmund Freud; 9) Alfred Adler; 10) Philippe Pinel; 11) Thomas S. Szasz

Organisational

1) Christian Science; 2) The Samaritans; 3) The Knights Templar; 4) The Poor Clares; 5) The Church Missionary Society; 6) The Quakers; 7) The present organisation of the social services; 8) The Salvation Army; 9) Amnesty International; 10) The Octavia Hill Housing Association; 11) The Ladies National Association for the Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act; 12) Toc-H; 13) Boy scouts (as Lord Baden-Powell).

Nobly made

1) Hilaire Belloc; 2) Oscar Wilde; 3) Evelyn Waugh; 4) Spike Milligan; 5) Nancy Mitford; 6) Harold Wilson; 7) George Farquhar; 8) Clive James

Where

1) Erewhon (S. Butler); 2) Garden of Eden (Genesis 2); 3) Utopia (Thomas More); 4) Transylvania (Dracula); 5) Arcadia where Pan slept at midday; 6) Earthsea (Ursula le Guin); 7) Freedonia (Duck Soup); 8) Shangri-la (Lost Horizon)

In song

1) Billericay Dicky (song by Ian Dury); 2) Belgrave Square (from *Iolanthe*); 3) Nice (from *The Boyfriend*); 4) San Francisco (from 'Let's Go To San Francisco'); 5) Runcorn (song by Noel Coward); 6) Penny Lane (song by Beatles); 7) Lambeth Walk.

In full

1) Edward Palmer; 2) Leigh; 3) The 'S' doesn't stand for anything; 4) Ronald David; 5) John Ross; 6) Charles; 7) Herbert Ernest; 8) Victor Sawdon

What

1) Animal magnetism; 2) Anima (Jung); 3) Anima Christi (prayer att. Loyola); 4) Animated her (Betty Boop); 5) Animé (a resin); 6) Animals; 7) Animosity; 8) Anima Poeta (selections from Samuel Taylor Coleridge published by Ernest Hartley Coleridge)

When

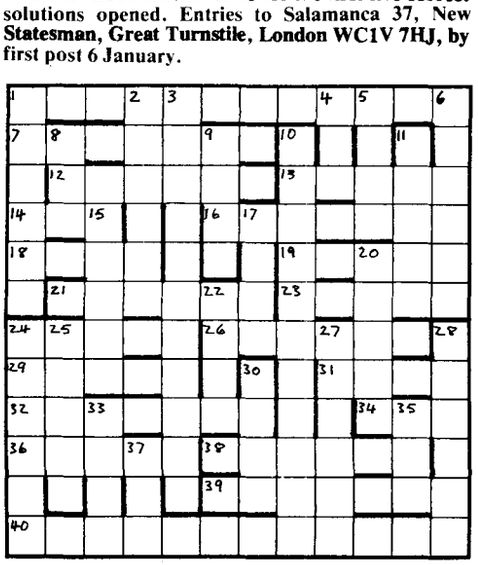
1) 1947 when Peter Smith as eleventh man scored 163 for Essex; 2) 1864 when bowlers were freed of restrictions on the height of arm at delivery; 3) 1949 when England made 174 in 95 minutes; 4) 1977-1979 when Lillee was out of test cricket; 5) 1938 when Len Hutton broke Bradman's test record; 6) 1966 when Basil d'Oliveira first played for England; 7) 1939 when eight-ball overs were experimented with; 8) 1952-1958 when Surrey won seven championships

Which how

1) How to win friends and influence people; 2) How to be Topp; 3) How do I love thee?; 4) How the West was Won; 5) How they brought the good news from Ghent to Aix; 6) How does your garden grow?; 7) How do you do what you do to me?; 8) How to Marry a Millionaire; 9) How many roads must a man walk down?; 10) How Green was my Valley

Salamanca 37
'1, 40'

PRIZES: Book tokens for £5 for the first five correct solutions opened. Entries to Salamanca 37, New Statesman, Great Turnstile, London WC1V 7HJ, by first post 6 January.



The bracketed sum after certain clues, when translated (singularly or plurally) provides an additional hint to the nature of these answers entered normally. All other clues contain the normal definition but subsidiary indications to the answer entered *one* letter short (no matter if it recurs in the word). The 24 omitted letters make up 1, 40 which provides the puzzle's theme. Season's greetings.

ACROSS

7 In wily manner sat uncomfortably at Yule perhaps (8)

12 (-11) (See also 23) Birds in a box, strangely red (6)

13 Dye obtained from Roccella (not lac) (6)

14 (-10) Girl with a singular bust? (3)

16 Very small stream endlessly flowed redly round castle (8)

18 What was heraldic gold and red for keeping foes out (5)

19 + 5 (-20) Lure, a sort of dyed cuckoo mostly? (9)

21 Winds (without power) watches (7)

23 (-22) (See also 12) They help towards making syrup (fruity kind) (5)

24 Fairway's bent? Go back to peg! (6)

26 Note this in possibly deep bit of verse (7)

29 A tramp, a rare sort without nothing (6)

31 Black — not entirely loyal — cook? (5)

32 (-24) Maverick's lady, the reverse of wanton in a cap? (7)

34 See 25

36 Hurt by turning on TV interference? (6)

38 Burn slowly in US cataclysm old rags (7)

39 Somehow unmeet about end regions — such straining? (8)

DOWN

1 (+8) Pony with fancy skin marking (6)

2 (+0) Birds in heat, pair of them, rising (6)

3 (+2) Band crowding closely without clamour around King (11)

4 Plaster bird found in threes ascending always (4)

5 See 19

6 Strain to lift up spade in first place? That's birds for you! (7)

8 Black-marketeer from society that's religious (4)

9 See one that's black in this state? (5)

10 (+0) Their wings oped, spread to cover eggs? (11)

11 Woolly stuff some level out (6)

15 Roofing-tile made of gault (6)

17 Serum out east concocted as a depilatory (5)

20 Oriental race, bent in fold (6)

22 (-10) Fellow to look as if half asleep? (4)

24 Gold records round about — handle carefully with these? (7)

25 + 34 (-53) Fool with a bomb? Get zero score (8)

27 (-24) Rubber in the cooking-pan? It shouldn't taste like that! (6)

28 (-21) Ugly ducklings say, not sad ilk knowing they're these? (6)

30 (-19) Male made up as entertainer (4)

33 In weak condition force to smell this? (5)

35 Daub, unpleasant without one (4)

37 Killer-whales yellow, see? (4)

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10 GREAT TURNSTILE, LONDON WC1V 7HJ.
Telex:— 28449

COPY DEADLINE — MONDAY FOR FOLLOWING FRIDAY'S ISSUE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAUX
WEST MIDLANDS
TRIBUNAL REPRESENTATION PROJECT — WALSALL

Based in WALSALL, this is a continuation of a successful project funded by Manpower Services Commission. The Project offers representation before a variety of administrative tribunals. In particular, Supplementary Benefit, National Insurance, Medical Appeal and Industrial Tribunals.

The Project will seek to act as a specialist resource to voluntary and statutory agencies within Walsall Borough, offering advice and assistance to them in tribunal representation. The Project is expected to undertake casework for agencies and assist them in improving the service to appellants throughout the Borough. The project requires two staff to achieve these aims.

Team Leader

To take overall responsibility for the project and establish a system of local management with employment responsibility.
Salary: AP5 £5,973-£6,381 (Award pending)

Caseworker

To undertake advice and representation with appellants before tribunals.
Salary: AP3 £4,581-£5.130 (Award pending)

Both posts require persons with a commitment to assisting individuals and groups in exercising their rights. Some relevant legal background would be an advantage as would experience of advice work particularly in the area of welfare rights and employment. Application forms and further details available from:

Head of Personnel,
National Association of Citizens Advice Bureaux,
110 Drury Lane,
London WC2B 5SW.

Citizens Advice Bureau

Closing date **16 January 1981**

THE MINORITY RIGHTS GROUP

an international human rights charity, requires an efficient and reliable

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY

to run its small office in Central London, starting January. Salary £5,000 p.a. plus LVs.

Contact:
Maxine Berot on 01-930 6659
as soon as possible

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Tel: 01-834 4979

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Closing date for the return of forms: **15 February 1981**

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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ADVERTISERS

Owing to rises in print and production costs the Classified Advertisement rates in the **NEW STATESMAN will increase** from, and including, the issue of 2 January 1981. The following rates will apply:

Lineage: £1.40 per 6 words (Min. 12 words)
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Box Numbers: £1.50

The New Statesman Classified Department

wish all our customers and readers an enjoyable and peaceful Christmas and a productive New Year.

ADVERTISERS PLEASE NOTE:

Copy deadline for issue dated 2 Jan. 1981

MON. 22 DEC.

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NEXUS: Thousands of single, separated, divorced and widowed men & women belong to it. Phone for the brochure. London: 359 7656/7415, Glasgow: 221 1090, Manchester: 834 8964. Leeds: 455186, Bristol: 44365.

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HAPPY, attractive, 42 yr-old mother of late teenage family, wishes to meet tall, unattached, well-educated man. Box 176.

FORMER JOURNALIST, manufacturer, hotelier, self-employed, London, entering new, exciting professional career, wishes make 'lateral' step towards 'woman behind closed doors' who, desiring good relationship, unable make practical contact. Only requisites; character, warmth, awareness. Am responsible, warm, unconventional, open, wide interests, ageless 55. Box 67.

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JEWISH GENTLEMAN, youthful 56, older looking, fit, healthy, reliable, sincere, Continental born, unemployed, seeks refined, solvent lady. Box 178.

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MALE, 34, tall, affluent, intelligent seeks love and companionship of an older woman. Box 162.

MALE, 50s, solvent, average looks, seeks attractive female. Outings or meaningful relationship. Ints: theatre, music, sport. No objection to lady with young children. Box 160.

MAN, 30, Manchester, seeks woman, 30-ish, Manchester-ish, for usual reasons. Box 203.

MANCHESTER: 50-ish, separated male academic, seeks caring, intelligent, non-smoking, female companion. Box 210.

NATIONAL GOVERNMENT. Details from: The Centre Party, 83 Donnington Court, Donnington Rd, London NW10 3TJ.

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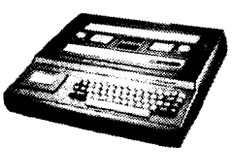

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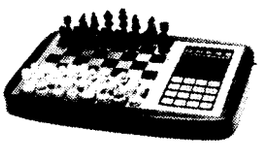

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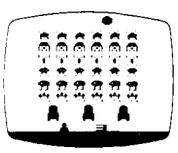

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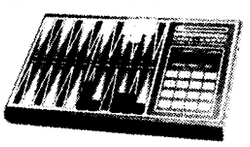

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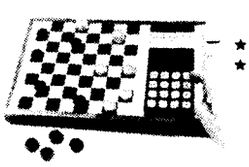

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Theatres

ALDWYCH THEATRE Royal Shakespeare Company 836 6404. Recorded booking info 836 5332. cc 379 6233. 'The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby.'. No perfs 24, 25 Dec. RSC also at The Warehouse (836 6808) in premiere production 'Television Times' by Peter Prince. No perfs 24, 25, 26 Dec. RSC also at Piccadilly in Willy Russell's hilarious "Educating Rita.' No perfs 25 Dec.

HAMPSTEAD THEATRE. 722 9301. Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3. People Show. Mon.-Sat. 8.15 p.m. N.B. No perfs week commencing 22 Dec.

NATIONAL THEATRE. 928 2252. Olivier (open stage) 'The Romans in Britain' (not suitable for children) 'Hiawatha', 'The Life of Galileo', 'Sisterly Feelings', 'Amadeus'. Lyttelton (proscenium stage) 'The Provoked Wife', 'The Browning Version'/'Harlequinade'. Cottesloe (small auditorium) 'The Nativity'. See daily press for dates and times or ring recorded information 928 2256.

OLD VIC. 928 7616 cc 261 1821 'S'. 19, 20, 26, 27, 29, 30 Dec. 8 p.m. 22, 23, 31 Dec. & 1 Jan. 7.30 p.m. 'Trelawny of the Wells' 19, 20, 26, 27, 29, 30 Dec. 1.30 p.m. & 4.30 p.m. 22, 23, 24, 31 Dec. & 1 Jan. 2.30 p.m. 'Toad of Toad Hall' 28 Dec. 7.30 p.m. 'Good Clean Fun'.

THEATREGOERS – please note: cc - credit cards; S-Student standby.

Meetings

80TH BIRTHDAY LECTURES

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LECTURES ON

6 January: 7 p.m.-9 p.m. — Socialism or Barbarism
9 January: 7 p.m.-9 p.m. — Britain and America: Two English Speaking Democracies
12 January: 7 p.m.-9 p.m. — Immigrants to Britain: Formerly Colonial Peoples

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Conference

CONFERENCE — 'Can Local Government Survive?'. 17 January, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Memorial Hall, Barker's Pool, Sheffield. Speakers: David Blunkett, Leader of Sheffield Council, and Bob Litherland, MP. Fee £1. Book through the Labour Coordinating Committee, 9 Poland Street, London W1. or pay at the door.

Cinema

SCREEN ON THE HILL 435 3366 (opp. Belsize Park Tube). Woody Allen's 'Stardust Memories' (AA). Ring 435 9787.

Publications

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Introduced by Tony Benn MP

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LOCAL INITIATIVES IN GREAT BRITAIN (1981)

edited by

Stan Windass

The growth of Local Initiatives in the form of Community Cooperatives, Town Development Trusts, Local Enterprise Trusts, and many others, represents a hopeful sign for the development of a more decentralised and responsible society.

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Publication date: January 1981)

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Don't let Irish prisoners die!

CHRISTMAS approaches and with it imminent tragedy in the H Blocks and Armagh Jail. Unless the Government concedes, by the time you read this some of the hunger strikers will be dying or dead.

We must understand why they are so determined and why their communities support them. Most of the protesters are under 21. They have grown up with troops on their streets. Few would now be in prison but for the 'troubles'.

They have been arrested, interrogated and tried under emergency legislation which itself defines their alleged offences as 'political'. All normal judicial procedures have been abandoned, and confessions obtained by force are admissible in the no-jury courts.

The prisoners want to wear their own clothes, to abstain from prison work, to have free association, to organise their own recreation and education, and to have their rights to visits, letters and remission restored.

Many prominent people in Ireland and internationally are calling on the Government to concede to the prisoners. It is vital that all people of conscience in Britain now make their voices heard.

Please help avert a tragedy that may have terrible consequences for both these islands.

This advertisement was paid for by contributions from many concerned people in Britain and co-ordinated by **Information on Ireland, 1 North End Road, London W14.**

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I enclose a donation of £ for War on Want's Christmas appeal.

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Your support will ensure the continuance of this fight against the social and economic conditions that maintain poverty, create hunger and destroy millions of lives every year.

This Christmas help make War on Want.

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